

Reporters allowed into occupied areas

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The Israeli army has lifted a ban on journalists freely entering the occupied territories imposed three months ago at the start of the Gulf war, the defence ministry said Monday. Since Jan. 17 the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip were declared closed military areas. Reporters were permitted entry only with a military escort. The rules for journalists covering the West Bank and Gaza return to as they were before the Gulf war and it is permitted to freely enter these areas as in the past, a defence ministry statement said. During the war, most Palestinians were confined to their homes, exacerbating economic hardships brought on by the 40-month-old uprising. The restrictions severely limited foreign and domestic television coverage. Journalists had to rely on local Palestinian reports. "It handicapped the foreign press even more than before," said Conny Mus, chairman of the Foreign Press Association. We were only allowed in with an army spokesman. We were not able to take freely to Palestinians. Mr. Mus said he would continue to protest at standing army orders which allow area commanders to randomly bar journalists. "We are still not able to freely cover the story in the territories," Mr. Mus said.

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Islamabad links hijacking to Bhutto

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The government said Monday it will soon issue a report linking four men killed in last month's hijacking of a Singapore Airlines jet to the party of former Premier Benazir Bhutto. Four Pakistanis hijacked the aircraft March 26 on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Singapore and were killed by commandos the next day. Ms. Bhutto has denied any linkage to her party. Interior Minister Shujaat Hussain told reporters Monday the report had been completed by federal investigators and would be released later this week. Initial reports by the Pakistani government indicated that the hijackers had links to Ms. Bhutto's left-leaning Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Ms. Bhutto has charged the hijacking was a conspiracy by the conservative government to undermine the former premier and her party. The government denies the allegations. "We will make public the links the hijackers had with PPP," Mr. Hussain said at a news conference. "You already know that the hijackers were demanding release of PPP leaders...that proves the PPP's connections with them." The hijackers had demanded the release of several jailed members of Ms. Bhutto's party, including her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, who was detained on charges of kidnapping, extortion and murder.

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Two U.S. soldiers injured by mine on Turkish-Iraqi border

UZUMLU, Turkey (AP) — Two U.S. soldiers were injured Monday by a landmine at a Kurdish refugee camp on the Turkish-Iraqi border, military officials said. They were the first such injuries reported among about 8,000 U.S. troops helping provide relief aid to Iraqi refugees on the border since early April. "The extent of their injuries is unknown right now," said John Hopkins, a public affairs officer. The border had been mined by both Iraq and Turkey before the Gulf war.

War objects wash up on Bahrain coast

BAHRAIN (AP) — Residents of Bahrain were urged Monday to be alert for unexploded ordnance and other objects from the Gulf war that started washing ashore. Bahrain is about 480 kilometres to the south of the Iraq-Kuwait borders. An explosives scare spread across Busaifin beach after a cylinder-shaped object about 45 centimetres long washed ashore. Its photograph was widely published. The object was made of plastic, was wrapped in polyethylene and had wires attached. The police removed it after a villager alerted the coast guard. The coast guard director urged people not to touch strange objects and published a telephone number to be contacted in case of similar sightings. Mohammad Al Mawdah of the interior ministry confirmed the report and told the Associated Press that the located object was still being analysed.

Greece names bombing suspect

ATHENS (AP) Authorities said Monday a tattered identity card has led them to believe an Arab student was responsible for a bombing that killed seven people in Patras. The card was found near the mutilated body of a man who forensic experts have determined was carrying a plastic bag loaded with 12 kilograms of explosive when it detonated. Friday's blast outside the office of Air Courier Services killed seven people and injured eight. Police have not determined the intended target of the bomb. The international parcel service was in the same six-storey building as the local Greek Communist Party headquarters and the Patras appeals court. No group has claimed responsibility for the blast at the port city 180 kilometres from Athens. The body of the man police said carried the explosive was mutilated beyond identification. But the public order ministry announced that based on tattered identity card it had identified the mutilated body as Ahmad Hashaykey, 26, an engineer student at Petras Polytechnic University.

Underwriters relax rules on Kuwait cargo

LONDON (R) — Insurance underwriters relaxed some war risk rate restrictions on marine and air cargo to and from Kuwait and the neutral zone, the War Risks Rating Committee said Monday. The two areas, which previously had the same category Iraq, were moved to "held red" status which allows writers to set their own for war risk cover. Iraq aimed its status as an area covered where permitted legislative order, which cargo insurance may be quoted with government permission only.

French foreign minister arrives in Libya

Tunis (R) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas arrived in Tripoli Monday, the most senior French official to visit Libya in years. The Libyan news agency (JANA) said Mr. Dumas was greeted at the airport by Libyan Foreign Minister Ibrahim Beshari, but did not say what was the nature of the visit. Mr. Dumas was expected to travel to Egypt for talks on bilateral relations and the Middle East after the Gulf war.

Iraq seen ready to agree to Kurds' terms

THE IRAQI government appears willing to concede generous autonomy terms for Kurds in north but Kurdish rebel leaders invited to Baghdad are sceptical after three days of negotiations. Kurdish sources quoted by Reuters said the government was desperate to repair an international image tarnished by its crackdown on Kurdish rebels that cost hundreds of thousands fleeing from their homes and created a massive refugee problem along the borders of Iran and Turkey.

Baghdad, which has maintained a news blackout about the talks since they opened on Saturday with a Kurdish rebel leader by veteran guerrilla Jalal Talabani, seemed willing to consider virtually all Kurdish autonomy demands, the sources said. Kurdish rebel spokesman said in London on Saturday that Mr. Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), was in Baghdad at the invitation of the government.

Other members of the delegation were Nechirvan Barazanchi, nephew of Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) leader Massoud Barzani, Sami Abdul Rahman of the People's Democratic Party and Rasoul Mamand of the Socialist Party of Kurdistan. The London-based sources in contact with KDP leaders in a rebel camp in northern Iraq on Monday reported much scepticism among Kurds in general about the talks.

"Talabani went down on Saturday at (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein's request. The talks continued on Sunday. There is no evidence of a conclusion. The last we heard they were still there," said a London spokesman for the KDP.

London's Times newspaper reported on Monday that the Iraqi government was considering allowing the city of Kirkuk, an important oil centre with a mixed Arab-Kurdish population, to be included in a proposed Kurdish autonomous region.

Kurdish sources believe Baghdad may be willing to do a deal with the Kurds in order to secure some relief from sanctions imposed by the United Nations after its August invasion of Kuwait.

Kurds, about 20 per cent of Iraq's 18 million people, assert the government violated an agreement to give them autonomy in 1974. They say any future accord must have international guarantees.

Their latest rebellion last month was crushed by government forces, sending two million refugees fleeing to mountains along the Turkish and Iranian borders.

The KDP spokesman said there was confusion over the government's offer of talks "because of the bitter experiences of the past" but there was a possibility that it was serious.

He pointed to changes announced by the Iraqi government in recent weeks, including

the appointment of a new prime minister and promises of democracy and of a free press.

"Whether this was all cosmetic to win support (from foreign powers) we don't yet know. We will know better when the discussions are over," he said.

The Iraqi media has not mentioned any negotiations with Kurds and Iraqi officials refuse even to confirm that talks were taking place.

The Iraqi Shiite opposition denounced the talks in Baghdad, saying the time had come to topple the government.

A spokesman for the Tehran-based Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) said the group had turned down offers of peace talks from the Iraqi government.

"The overthrow of the regime is certainly the primary goal of all Iraqi people," the statement carried by the national Iranian News Agency IRNA said.

SCIRI said the talks violated the charter of the Iraqi national joint action committee, an alliance of 17 parties that included the Kurds and was formed in Damascus last December.

The opposition Shiites, like the Kurds, rebelled after the Gulf war and saw their uprising crushed soon afterwards.

While the Kurdish leaders appear more concerned with gaining a secure future for minority Kurds inside Iraq, Shiite opposition groups are keen to overthrow the government

French, British troops join U.S. marines in north Iraq

SILUPI, Turkey (Agencies) — French and British troops moved into northern Iraq Monday to join U.S. marines setting up camps for thousands of Kurds and a U.S. spokesman said Iraqi soldiers had pulled back.

French paratroopers drove across the Habur border bridge from Turkey in the morning in six trucks, two jeeps, a fuel tanker and a first aid van.

About 100 British marine commandos flew to northern Iraq by helicopter from the Turkish provincial capital of Diyarbakir and set up base in an empty school near the Iraqi town of Zakho.

"We are in the business of reassuring people that they are not going to be killed when they return," Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Thomson, commander of the force, told reporters.

By the end of their first day establishing a haven in northern Iraq for Kurdish refugees, U.S. marines had set up more than 30 blue-and-white tents in a lush

meadow near the Turkish border.

Jean de Courten, a senior International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) official responsible for the Gulf, said Baghdad authorities had granted the humanitarian organisation complete freedom of movement throughout Iraq.

This enabled the ICRC to operate in areas that were inaccessible to other relief agencies, he told reporters at a news conference in Geneva.

The ICRC had concentrated its relief efforts on vulnerable groups in areas around Baghdad and the southern city of Basra, centre of a crushed Shiite Muslim rebellion.

But Mr. De Courten said the unprecedented exodus of Kurds had forced the ICRC to shift its attention to northern Iraq. Delegates had been sent to Mosul and Kirkuk, and the ICRC was trucking tents, blankets, food, and medical supplies to the region.

The United States and its allies

are working independently of the Red Cross, focusing on the Iraqi town of Zakho. On Sunday, dozens of helicopters ferried troops and supplies into Zakho, where refugees now subsisting in perilous mountain camps on the Turkish border are to be transported.

Zakho is about 32 kilometres from the Turkish border town of Silopi.

The United States insists its presence is temporary and that the camps will be turned over to the United Nations as soon as possible.

Iraq had denounced the move as interference but appears to be cooperating on the ground. Iraqi officers agreed on Sunday to set up a joint liaison office with the Americans in Zakho.

British and French reconnaissance teams went into Iraq on Sunday to gather information for Monday's deployment.

U.S. marines began work on

PCC debates Baker plan

TUNIS (Agencies) — A hundred Palestinian leaders met in a secret location in Tunisia Monday to debate U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's Middle East peace proposals.

Palestinian sources said Monday's session of the Palestine Central Council (PCC) discussed an executive working paper which dealt mainly with Mr. Baker's proposals for a regional peace conference.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat opened the meeting on Sunday night with a 90-minute speech and Political Department chief Farouk Kaddoumi delivered a report, the sources said.

The PCC acts as an intermediary between the PLO executive, chaired by Mr. Arafat, and the Palestine National Council.

A split has emerged between Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fateh movement and headline groups on their response to the U.S. plan.

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by Nayef Hawatmeh, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by George Habash,

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Kuwaiti activists accuse regime of gagging them

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies) — The government refused permission for opposition groups to hold a news conference Monday and instructed a hotel to turn off the lights in a ballroom where the event was to be held, officials said.

The opposition groups said the action, which came hours before a visit by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, showed the ruling Al Sabah family was not sincere about allowing greater democracy and free speech.

"We were shocked," said Sami Al Khatrashi, a leader of the Islamic Constitutional Movement, a Sunni Muslim group and the de facto Muslim Brotherhood considered the strongest opposition force. "We expected the government to respect the people since we were the arm of the government (during the Iraqi occupation)."

The seven opposition groups scheduled the joint news conference at the Kuwait International Hotel to criticise the appointments to the new cabinet, which was named Saturday and sworn in Sunday by the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

Though many ministers were

ousted or demoted, members of the Al Sabah family continue to hold the key positions and no opposition figures were selected.

Hotel officials refused to allow the news conference, saying they were acting under instructions from the Ministry of Information.

"The ministry said no permission has been granted," said Fikri Al Shakay, the hotel's assistant manager.

Reporters and opposition figures were asked to leave the room before the news conference began, the lights were turned out and police officers circulated among the crowd.

"This proves that the government plans on gagging mouths and having only one voice, that of the government... it shows they have narrow horizons," said Yousef Al Nisfi, a former minister who now heads an opposition group of influential merchants.

The seven groups had scheduled the news conference to explain why they rejected the new cabinet.

In a joint statement on Sunday the opposition alliance said the cabinet was "a blatant challenge

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NIGERIAN ENVOY: His Majesty King Hussein Monday receives Nigerian Oil Minister Jibrin Aminu, who delivered to him a message from President Ibrahim Babangida (see page 3)

U.N. chief proposes panel on Iraqi arms

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar Monday proposed a special commission to oversee destruction of Iraq's chemical, biological and other weapons, as mandated by the Gulf war ceasefire resolution.

In a report to the Security Council, Mr. Perez de Cuellar gave no details of how the destruction and monitoring of Iraq's weapons system would be carried out.

That would be decided by the 20-25-member commission to be established later by the council, in conjunction with the secretary-general and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Vienna.

According to the April 3 ceasefire resolution, Iraq must destroy chemical and biological weapons, nuclear weapons materials and ballistic missiles with a range of over 145 kilometres.

On Friday, Iraq handed over to the United Nations and the IAEA a list of its remaining chemical and biological arms and its ballistic missiles. It denied that it had nuclear weapons-grade materials or a nuclear weapons programme.

The U.S. government called Iraq's report inadequate and said it had evidence of a nuclear weapons programme and other unreported arms projects.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar said Monday that an executive body should have experts in each of five areas: Biological weapons, chemical arms, ballistic missiles, nuclear weapons capabilities, and future compliance and support.

Appointments were expected to be made and the commission would employ as many additional experts, inspectors, disposal teams and field support officers as needed. The size of the commission would drop as the tasks of destruction were completed.

Kuwaiti claim

Two months after the end of the Gulf war, Kuwait accused Iraq on Monday of continuing to hold more than 5,400 Kuwaiti civilians and soldiers.

Kuwaiti Ambassador Mohammad Abul Hasan charged Baghdad with failure "to abide by the terms of relevant Security Council resolutions, which puts into question the credibility and motives of the Iraqi regime."

"Iraq is yet to repatriate the remaining Kuwaiti prisoners of war and detainees, estimated at 5,433."

Mr. Abul Hasan, in a letter to the Security Council, also said Iraq has not declared its acceptance of liability for loss, damage and injury to Kuwait and other countries and their citizens and corporations from actions related to its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Baker secures Saudi support for peace parley, visits Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker Monday gained the support of Saudi Arabia for a Middle East peace conference and then took a detour from diplomacy to visit Kuwait.

Before leaving Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Mr. Baker had a 35-minute telephone conversation with Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh. Mr. Baker would like Moscow to co-sponsor the peace talks, provided the Soviets resume full diplomatic relations with Israel after a 24-year lapse.

The foreign minister is expected to make a trip to Israel soon, and it was possible Mr. Baker could fly to Moscow before completing his latest tour.

The Saudis confirmed during Mr. Baker's meetings in Jeddah with King Fahd and Prince Saud, the foreign minister, that they would not participate in peace

negotiations though they may take part in dealing with such side issues as the environment.

But Prince Saud, seeing Mr. Baker off to Kuwait on Monday, said, "it was conveyed to the secretary that Saudi Arabia believes it is a time to put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to achieve a comprehensive and just solution to the Palestinian question."

Therefore, the foreign minister said, Saudi Arabia "supports the efforts of the United States for the convening of an early peace conference to achieve this objective."

Mr. Baker flew on to Kuwait, telling reporters he intended to follow up reports of human rights violations in the emirate since it was liberated from Iraqi occupation.

Asked whether the kingdom might hold direct talks with Israel, Prince Saud said the im-

Aziz on Arab tour

AMMAN (Agencies) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz left Jordan for Tunis Monday on a post-Gulf war tour of Arab countries, an official said. Mr. Aziz, who drove to Amman earlier in the day, held informal talks at Amman airport with Foreign Minister Taher Al Massi, the official added.

"The talks were informal and touched on the situation in Iraq and political developments in the region," the official said.

The two men discussed the internal situation in Iraq, including talks under way in Baghdad between the government and Kurdish rebel leaders on greater autonomy for the Kurds, he said.

They also reviewed U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's trip to Jordan Saturday as part of a Middle East peace mission.

The official gave no further details but newspapers said Mr. Aziz would tour several North African states, most of which remained neutral in the Gulf crisis despite widespread popular support for Iraq's defiance of the West.

Aqaba talks improved ties, but accord on peace steps yet to come

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Secretary of State James Baker's short visit to Jordan on Saturday signalled the beginning of a new chapter in relations between Jordan and the U.S. but fell short of reaching agreement on means to solve the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

On the issue of bilateral relations, which reached a low point during the Gulf crisis and war that followed, "we agreed to let bygones be bygones," said a senior Jordanian official. "But on the question of how to proceed towards peace, we thought the Americans could

do more, even though we have been encouraged by their seriousness this time around," the official added.

While both sides expressed keen interest in reestablishing good bilateral ties based on mutual respect and understanding, the Jordanians were less sanguine about the chances of pinning the Americans down on such crucial issues as stopping the building of Israeli settlements and putting pressure on Israel to start the proposed talks on the basis of implementing U.N. resolutions 242 and 338, rather than waste valuable time debating endlessly the Israeli interpretation of these resolutions. "We know that they (Amer-

icans) can pressure Israel to accept resolutions 242 and 338 according to the common understanding of those resolutions, which is basically that Israel has to withdraw from the occupied territories in return for recognition of Israel," the Jordanian official said.

"But what the Americans seemed to be saying is that there would have to be a peace process — confidence building measures and the like — first before going on to talk about the core issues," the official added.

The resolutions call on Israel to return land it occupied during the 1967 war in return for a

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Shamir assures hardliners of rejection of leaving Arab land

TEL AVIV (R) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir sought on Monday to allay the fears of far-right politicians and Jewish settlers that Israel would trade occupied Arab territory for peace with the Palestinians.

Mr. Shamir met the Tehiya party, a three-member faction in the ruling coalition, and representatives of settlers in the occupied territories as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker continued efforts to convene Middle East peace talks.

Although Mr. Baker had not confirmed a return visit, Mr. Shamir's spokesman Avi Pazner said the secretary of state was due here Tuesday night for another attempt to bridge the gap between Arab and Israeli terms for

a peace conference.

Jewish settlers and the Tehiya party sought assurance in separate sessions with Mr. Shamir that Israel would not withdraw from the occupied Arab territories. Washington has called for Israel to trade land for peace with the Arabs.

"The prime minister heard us out and we left with a sense that (he'll keep) all of his obligations regarding that there is absolutely no policy of territory for peace, no territorial withdrawal from any centimetre of the 'land of Israel'," said Goula Cohen, deputy science minister.

Ms. Cohen, who fought in the same extremist underground Jewish terror group as Mr. Shamir before 1948, said she understood

Arab-Israeli peace talks would not touch territorial issues.

A spokesman for Mr. Shamir declined to discuss the proposed peace negotiations.

Ms. Cohen also said there would be no halt, even temporarily, in building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

A spokesman for the settlers who met Mr. Shamir, Zvi Katzover, reported Mr. Shamir said he had to honour his commitment to the United States not to force Soviet immigrants to settle in the occupied West Bank or Gaza Strip.

However, Mr. Katzover said the settlers were satisfied with Mr. Shamir's assurances regarding the proposed peace talks and "I came out with a good feeling."

منا من الأصل

Syria rejects concessions on principles for peace

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria said Monday a Middle East peace settlement would be impossible unless Israel withdrew from Arab territories and recognised Palestinian rights.

Official newspapers, in comments published hours before U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was due in Damascus, urged Washington to press Israel to accept U.N. participation in peace talks and implement Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

The resolutions call for Israel withdrawal from territory occupied in the Middle East war of 1967 and for a U.N. conference to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict but Israel has so far rejected a land-for-peace deal.

"Recognising Palestinian rights and withdrawing from Arab territories are two basic conditions without which peace is impossible to achieve. Israel should fully realise this," the official daily Tishreen said.

"Arabs want peace. They want stability and security. But they

would never abandon their rights..."

"Peace requires a sincere will. This is not available with Israeli leaders because they insist on occupation, building settlements and putting obstacles in the way of Baker's mission," it added.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, a close ally of Syria, sent his top political adviser Osama Al Baz to Damascus on Sunday after talks in Cairo with Mr. Baker who is on his third Middle East tour in six weeks.

Officials said Mr. Baz, who was meeting President Hafez Al Assad shortly before Mr. Baker arrived, exchanged views Sunday with Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa on the Arab-Israeli conflict and a regional peace settlement "based on U.S. resolutions."

Israel says it will not accept a U.N. role in Middle East peace efforts or withdraw from the occupied Arab territories.

Mr. Baker is calling for a limited regional peace conference that could be acceptable to Israel

as a first step in negotiations between Arabs and Israelis. But Syria, whose stand is crucial to the success of Mr. Baker's mission, has shown little enthusiasm for the idea.

The official daily Al Baath, organ of the ruling Baath Party, said Washington should press Israel to accept peace.

"If U.S. diplomacy is faced at the end with Israel's obstinacy, this really requires more pressure...to force Israel to submit to the international will and restore the legitimate rights to the Palestinian people."

Another official daily the Syria Times, said Israel was wasting Mr. Baker's time and urged him to declare a clear position.

"Mr. Baker should be convinced now that the Israeli leaders are wasting his precious time and they are scuttling peace efforts, and without a U.S. clear-cut position and strong commitment towards peace, Israel's aggressive and expansionist policy will not come to an end," Syria Times said.

No time limit on U.S. role in Iraq

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle and Defence Secretary Dick Cheney have refused to say how long a U.S. relief effort for Kurdish and Shi'ite refugees would last, even as a U.N. envoy said it would not extend much longer than 60 days.

Mr. Quayle and Mr. Cheney told U.S. television interviewers on two programmes, respectively, that the relief efforts were not permanent, but balked at naming the day when they would end.

"Mr. Quayle said he would not give a deadline because 'if I'd say 60 days, 60 days from now you'd be asking someone, the vice-president said 60 days and 60 days is up — what happened?'"

Mr. Cheney said he could not say "precisely what the situation on the ground is going to look like a month from now."

Mr. Cheney has said since the efforts began that the U.S. forces want to turn over the operation to international relief organisations as soon as possible.

However, he said U.S. military forces can move faster than many international relief groups.

"Because of the dire circumstances, we think it's important to provide food, medical care, shelter, to get them down out of the mountains and that effort is well under way now," Mr. Cheney said.

Asked how large the U.S. military force would be, Mr. Cheney said: "We'll put in as much force as we need. At this point, it's fewer than 1,000 (marines) on the ground inside Iraq...they're backed up by additional forces if they're needed."

Prince Saddam Al Agha Khan, a United Nations envoy to Baghdad who is now in Geneva, told NBC that the U.S. relief role was "a very limited one in terms of the time frame, like maybe 60 days or whatever."

"And then at that point it should somehow dovetail with what we're (the United Nations) doing in the rest of the country," Prince Agha Khan said. "We have to begin to set the stage."

The prince noted that it is easier to open a refugee camp than to close one, and the real aim was to get the refugees to return to their homes.

"The last thing we want is another permanent camp, kind of Gaza Strip in the Zagros Mountains of Kurdistan," he said. "I think what we're trying to do, once they have found a safe haven in transit, that they can return home as quickly as possible."

The U.S. military is meanwhile considering using food to coax Iraqi refugees down from border mountains into the U.S. sanctuaries.

"I'd drop it a little further down the mountain each time. It's like you are feeding a squirrel. First you throw the food far away, slowly a little closer, then it's eating out of your hand," U.S. Army Major John Curd told Reuters Sunday.

"If the area is safe and they are hungry, they are going to come out," said Maj. Curd, spokesman for a U.S. forward supply base in the southeast Turkish city of Diyarbakir.

U.S. marines began erecting tents at the first of several planned refugee camps inside Iraq at the weekend.

Iraq moved 200 armed police into the northern town of Zakho Sunday and the U.S. military said the deployment violated an agreement for Iraqi security forces to withdraw from the town.

U.S. army Lieutenant General John Shalikashvili, allied task force commander, told Iraqi army officers he met inside Iraq on Friday to withdraw to a line 30 kilometres south of Zakho.

Libya slams U.S., allies over 'safe havens' in Iraq

NICOSIA (R) — Libya said Monday that the building of safety zones for refugees in northern Iraq by the United States and its allies was a violation of international law comparable to Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait.

"What American, British and French forces are doing in northern Iraq is unprecedented and violates international law. The citizens whom these forces claim to protect are Iraqis and responsibility for protecting them lies with their state alone," the official Libyan News Agency JANA said.

JANA, received in Cyprus, said the allied action was comparable to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in August.

"If Iraq embarked on an action which led to Kuwait losing its independence, then what happened in Kuwait now applies fully to Iraq which is under occupation by the same international grouping (that) pushed Iraq out of Kuwait," it said.

"Another Schwarzkopf must be sought now to liberate Iraq from occupation."

U.S. General Norman Schwarzkopf commanded the U.S.-led multinational force which fought Iraq.

About 17,000 U.S., British, French, Dutch and Italian troops have joined in an effort to build and protect camps inside Iraq to encourage up to half a million refugees from the Turkish border to return home.

Up to two million Kurds and Shi'ite Muslims fled their homes in Iraq after Iraqi forces crushed their rebellions in March.

Iraq has denounced the safe havens plan as interference in its internal affairs.

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Rafsanjani: Saudis accept anti-West rallies at Haj

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said Saudi Arabia had agreed to let Iranians stage anti-Western rallies during the annual Haj next June, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported Sunday.

More than 400 pilgrims, mainly Iranians, were killed in clashes with Saudi security forces trying to prevent political rallies in Islam's holiest shrine in Mecca in 1987.

The incident led Iran to boycott the pilgrimage, which all able Muslims are obliged to perform at least once, until this year.

Last month Iran resumed diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia and reached agreement on taking part in the pilgrimage. The terms of the accord made public then did not mention demonstrations.

IRNA, received in Cyprus, quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as telling university students during a visit on Saturday to Shiraz, southwest of Tehran, that Iran resumed the ties after Saudi Arabia accepted its terms.

"Now, contrary to their wishes, they (the Saudis) have consented to the holding of 'anti-tyranny towards infidels' rallies during the Haj," IRNA reported him as saying.

Riyadh also agreed to increase the number of Iranian pilgrims to the "level acceptable to us," he said.

Under the agreement, Saudi Arabia increased Iran's quota to 110,000 pilgrims compared to the previous level of 45,000, but fewer than Tehran's earlier demands of 150,000 pilgrims.

Israeli mortgage policy encourages settlements

TEL AVIV (AP) — A report released Sunday by two left-wing legislators said government mortgage policies encourage Israelis to move into the occupied territories.

The report, compiled by legislators Dedi Zucker of the Citizens Rights Movement and Haim Oron of Mapam, compared the four types of mortgages available to a family of four.

A family moving to Jerusalem is eligible for a 32,000 shekel (\$41,000) mortgage, paying 4.5 per cent interest on three-quarters of the sum, the report said. In Tel Aviv the mortgage is even less.

But the same family buying a home in the occupied West Bank can take out a 142,000 shekel (\$71,000) mortgage, interest-free except for 35,000 shekels (\$17,500), the report added.

After five years, 20,000 shekels (\$10,000) of the mortgage becomes a gift.

"When you look at the mortgages, a young couple that doesn't move into the occupied territories is an idiot," said Mr. Zucker. "It is clear that young couples and new immigrants without money will move into the occupied territories they have 'no other choice'."

In development towns to sparsely populated areas mortgages can reach the amounts offered in the occupied territories. They range from 110,000 shekels (\$55,000) to 142,000 shekels (\$71,000) for several isolated towns, the report said.

But, the government lays down infrastructure for private homes in the occupied territories at a cost of 30,000 shekels (\$15,000), Mr. Zucker said. Elsewhere homeowners pay the cost, even in development towns, he added.

Mr. Zucker also pointed out that development towns have a lower socioeconomic level than most of the settlements and are much further away from any metropolitan centre.

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In development towns to sparsely populated areas mortgages can reach the amounts offered in the occupied territories. They range from 110,000 shekels (\$55,000) to 142,000 shekels (\$71,000) for several isolated towns, the report said.

But, the government lays down infrastructure for private homes in the occupied territories at a cost of 30,000 shekels (\$15,000), Mr. Zucker said. Elsewhere homeowners pay the cost, even in development towns, he added.

Mr. Zucker also pointed out that development towns have a lower socioeconomic level than most of the settlements and are much further away from any metropolitan centre.

Majority of Americans don't think allies won war

NEW YORK (R) — A majority of U.S. adults do not think the U.S.-led coalition won the Gulf war because Iraqi President Saddam Hussein remains in power, according to a poll by Newsweek magazine.

The poll found that despite the allies' defeat of Iraq, 55 per cent of Americans do not believe the allies won the war.

Two weeks ago only 45 per cent of those polled said they thought the allies had not won the war, Newsweek reported in its latest edition.

In the latest telephone poll, 57 per cent said a ceasefire as called too soon in the war and 51 per cent said they would support U.S. troops resuming military action against Iraq to topple President Saddam.

Seventy per cent of those polled supported continued economic sanctions against Baghdad to overthrow President Saddam, and 75 per cent said they wanted the Iraqi leader captured and tried for "war crimes."

But only 36 per cent said they would want to see President Saddam assassinated in a covert operation, Newsweek reported.

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MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Exiled Kuwaitis to lose allowances

BAHRAIN (R) — Kuwaitis living in exile because of the Iraqi invasion last August will lose their government living allowances from June 1, the Kuwaiti embassy in Bahrain announced Monday. Two thirds of the 600,000 Kuwaiti citizens fled the emirate soon after Iraqi troops invaded on Aug. 2. The Iraqis left in late February and the Kuwaiti government has asked the exiles to return from May 4 onwards. It is arranging special flights in May to bring them home from Europe, Egypt and other Gulf states. A Kuwaiti embassy spokesman in Bahrain said there were nearly 12,000 Kuwaitis, or 4,000 families, living in the island state. Each family has been receiving an average monthly payment of 450 dinars (\$1,530). Up to 20 per cent of Kuwaitis living in exile in Bahrain and other Gulf states are expected to delay their return because they have children in local schools. But the embassy said the decision to cut off allowances was final and no payments would be made after June 1. In Bahrain, as in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, the government has provided some exiled Kuwaitis with small houses built originally for their own citizens. Others are staying in hotels and privately owned apartments.

Rafsanjani to visit Syria Saturday

DAMASCUS (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will make his first official visit to Syria on Saturday, Iranian diplomats said Monday. Other diplomats said talks between Mr. Rafsanjani and President Hafez Al Assad, who made his first visit to Iran since the 1979 Islamic revolution last September, were expected to cover the plight of the 12 Western hostages in Lebanon. Most of the hostages are held by pro-Iranian kidnappers in Lebanon, where Syria is the main foreign power with 40,000 troops in the country. The Iranian diplomats said the presidents would focus on issues related to Gulf developments and bilateral cooperation. Syria was Iraq's main Arab ally in its 1980-88 war with Iraq.

Lebanese arrested with \$1m in heroin

LARNACA (AP) — The narcotics squad found heroin with a street value of \$1 million in the suitcase of a Lebanese traveller Monday, customs officials said. Gaby Toufik Atallah, a 45-year-old cigar factory worker, was arrested after the police found 1,080 grammes of heroin in a false bottom of his suitcase. Mr. Atallah was transiting the international airport here from Beirut to Boston via Amsterdam, when police noticed the poor state of his clothing. Dozens of Lebanese are arrested each year in Cyprus, the main transit point for couriers from the Syrian-policed nation, a major producer of heroin and hashish.

French president's wife tours camps

NICOSIA (R) — The French president's wife, Danielle Mitterrand, toured Iranian camps housing Iraqi refugees near the Iran-Iraq border Sunday. The Iranian news agency IRNA quoted her as saying she would tell France and the world about the "sincere efforts of the Iranian people and the Red Crescent Society" to help to Iraqis. "In view of the tragic situation of the refugees, the benevolent nations of the world should rush to help these people," she said. Iran Sunday appealed for international aid to help one million Iraqi refugees. It has complained that it is not getting the scale of international relief given to Turkey, a U.S. ally in the Gulf war against Iraq. Mrs. Mitterrand said the refugee camps could be "temporary" shelters and that the refugees should return to their homeland to preserve their identity, IRNA reported.

Iranian minister heads for Denmark

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati left for Copenhagen Monday on a three-nation European Community (EC) tour expected to be dominated by the plight of Iraqi refugees in Iran. The Iranian news agency IRNA said Mr. Velayati would go on from Denmark to Ireland and Luxembourg, which currently holds the rotating presidency of the EC's Council of Ministers. Mr. Velayati will meet Luxembourg's Prime Minister Jacques Santer and Foreign Minister Jacques Poos to discuss relief for the Iraqi refugees in Iran, according to Luxembourg's Foreign Ministry.

JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY RISHA GAS POWER STATION ANNOUNCEMENT OF TENDER AVAILABILITY FOR RELOCATION OF TWO (2) GAS TURBINES TENDER NO. 51/89

Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) announces the tender document, No. 51/89 is available for purchase as of 23 April 1991.

The work under this tender consists of disassembling, packing, transporting from Amman South Power Station to Risha Power Station, re-installing, commissioning and put into operation of two (2) gas turbines each of 30 MW capacity.

The tender includes the supply and installation of all modification materials required for the turbines to burn gas fuel.

Sealed tenders shall be submitted to the secretary of JEA Tendering Committee before 10:00 a.m. Amman time, 29 June 1991 at the JEA offices in Amman.

Tender documents are available at the address given below for a non-refundable fee of JD 100 payable to JEA for each set of the tender documents.

Jordan Electricity Authority
Jabal Amman-7th Circle
Post Office Box 2310
Amman — Jordan
Telex: 21259 JEASAK
FAX: No. 818336

Minesweeper flotilla forms Japan's first overseas force

TOKYO (R) — Japan decided Monday to send a flotilla of navy minesweepers to help multinational efforts to clear the Gulf of mines — the country's first military deployment abroad since World War II.

A spokesman for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said Premier Toshiki Kaifu and LDP leaders agreed to send the ships at a liaison meeting. Mr. Kaifu would formally make an announcement on Wednesday, he said.

The vessels are Japan's first commitment of armed forces to any international post-war security operation since 1945. The United States had been informal-

ly asking Japan to make such a commitment.

The powerful business forum Keidanren, the Petroleum Association of Japan, the All-Japan Seamen's Union and shipowners have urged the government to send minesweepers to the Gulf.

Japan imports almost all of its oil. More than 60 per cent of its crude oil needs comes from the Gulf.

But opposition party leaders criticised the plan, saying it would violate the country's 1947 "peace constitution" and other laws.

"The government can send minesweepers abroad within the current legal framework," government spokesman Misoji Saka-

moto quoted Mr. Kaifu as saying. Kaifu told the liaison meeting this was not a combat mission because the war was over and the mines were considered abandoned weapons. Mr. Sakamoto told a news conference.

Mr. Kaifu would formally issue a statement on Wednesday explaining the dispatch of the six-vessel flotilla along those lines after a meeting of the National Security Council and a special cabinet session, the LDP spokesman said.

Japanese news reports said the flotilla would consist of four of the navy's newest wooden minesweepers, one supply ship and a tender.

Famine in Sudan exacerbated by war, logistics, bureaucracy

By Mohammad Osman
The Associated Press

KHARTOUM — Sudan is gripped by famine that may kill one million people and affect 11 million, but help has been delayed by the Gulf war, civil strife, logistics and bureaucracy.

"We're in a race against severe malnutrition, a race against summer rains, a race against depletion of fuel," a U.N. official said.

Two years of drought have reduced grain supplies to 1.2 million tonnes below the amount needed to get Sudan through the year.

Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir's government refused to acknowledge the famine officially, delaying an international relief effort.

Then Sudan isolated itself from major donors politically by siding with Iraq in the Gulf war, and shipping dislocations caused by the war held up the arrival of food.

The U.N. official said 100,000 tonnes of food had arrived, another 100,000 tonnes was expected by the end of April and 500,000 tonnes more had been pledged. He and others interviewed refused to be identified because of the government's sensitivity on the relief issue.

Agencies have been able to distribute only part of the food already in the country, the U.N. official said. It went to some of the most severely affected areas of the eastern and western Sudan.

He and others point out that getting food to Port Sudan, the main Red Sea port, represents

only a small part of bringing relief to the parched Sudanese outback.

A chronic shortage of trucks and fuel was made worse when Gulf states cut off supplies of free oil to punish Gen. Bashir for supporting Iraq.

Distribution is difficult even when transport is available because only one highway crosses the vast country.

After the road is negotiated, more obstacles remain.

In western Sudan, the dunes of Kordofan are nearly impassable because of heat and shifting sand. When rain falls in summer, the ground of south Kordofan becomes a mass of sticky mud. Walking becomes difficult, moving trucks impossible.

Famine-stricken regions have few adequate landing strips, even if money were available to fly the food in.

Mohammad Ahmad al Aghash of the Sudanese Relief and Rehabilitation Commission said the government and U.N. World Food Programme were addressing the logistics problems. Despite their efforts, 75,000 tonnes of food was in storage at Port Sudan in mid-April, awaiting transportation.

According to Mr. Aghash, the famine has not yet "reached the stage where we would say people are dying of hunger in Sudan."

World Food Programme spokesman Paul Mitchell said in Rome, however, that an average of eight people were dying every day of Sadr in north Kordofan, 400 kilometres southwest of Khartoum, where many hungry people have gone in search of

food.

The U.N. official in Khartoum said most people in the affected areas suffer malnutrition, some of it severe. At Sadr, he said, health workers were fighting an epidemic of measles, which is deadly when it attacks weak bodies.

South Sudan, plagued by an eight-year-old civil war, has more food this year than some other parts of the country. Experts expect it to escape a recurrence of the 1988 tragedy, when a famine caused by the war killed at least 250,000 people.

Mr. Aghash said the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army, which controls 90 per cent of the southern countryside, reneged on an agreement to allow unhindered relief flights.

Government bureaucracy is to blame for many of the bottlenecks. It slows relief efforts by delaying travel permits foreign aid workers need to reach famine areas, and with regulations and other impediments that hold up trains and Nile barge convoys trying to move south.

A train loaded with wheat and sorghum has sat for months at Muglad, 785 kilometres southwest of Khartoum. It cannot roll south to Aweil, only 240 kilometres away, until the government and rebels agree on security arrangements.

When and if it leaves, it will have to move so slowly, allowing for track repair and patrols for mines and ambushers, that the trip will take a month.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	19:14 Maghreb
15:30 Koran	20:37 'Isra
15:45 Programme review	
16:00 Children programmes	
16:15 News Summary	
16:30 Local programme	
16:45 Programme review	
16:55 News in Arabic	
17:00 Arabic series	
17:10 Programme review	
17:20 Local programme	
17:30 News summary in Arabic	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00 Les Raisons Laveurs	
18:30 Science Cauche	
19:00 News in French	
19:15 Aujourd'hui en Jordanie	
19:30 News in Hebrew	
19:45 News in Arabic	
20:00 Doc. "Coteau"	
20:10 News in English	
20:20 Columbo	
PRAYER TIMES	
04:31 Fajr	
05:54 (Sunrise) Doha	
11:34 Dhur	
16:12 'Asr	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
Khamisi weather conditions will prevail. Therefore, it will be dusty, hot and dry and some clouds will appear at low and medium altitudes. Winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly fresh and sea rough.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman 15 / 30	
Aqaba 19 / 37	
Deserts 13 / 32	
Jordan Valley 17 / 35	
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 32, Aqaba 38. Humidity readings: Amman 30 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Adel Ammar 812148	
Dr. Salah Al Usoud 690228	
Dr. Ahmad Odeh 763384	
Dr. Tawfiq Qab'eh 623029	
Fires pharmacy 661912	
Ferdows pharmacy 778336	
Al Asmaa pharmacy 637055	
Natroukh pharmacy 623672	
Al Salam pharmacy 636739	
Yaoum pharmacy 644945	
Shamsani pharmacy 637660	
IRBID:	
Dr. Ayman Abul Hajja (—)	
Al Shura'a pharmacy (273825)	
ZARQA:	
Dr. Jihad Musleh (—)	
Khalifah pharmacy 985417	
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre 637111	
Civil Defence Department 661111	
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue 630341	
Civil Defence Emergency 199	
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777	
Fire Brigade 891228	
Blood Bank 775121	
Highway Police 843402	
Traffic Police 893390	
Public Security Department 63033	
Hotel Complaints 605800	
Price Complaints 661176	
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints 891457	
Amman Municipality	
Complaints 787111	
Telephone Information	
(directory assistance) 121	
Overseas Calls 010230	
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs 623101	
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101	
Jordan Television 773111	
Radio Jordan 774111	
Water Authority 680100	
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615	
Electric Power	
Company 636381	
RJ Flight Information 08-53200	
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200	
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32	
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642816	
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642412	
Jabal Amman Maternity 642502	
Mallat, J. Amman 636140	
Palestine, Shamsani 664174	
Shamsani Hospital 669131	
University Hospital 845845	
AI-Muscher Hospital 6672279	
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737	
AI-Ahli, Abdali 66616466	
Italian, AI-Muhajreen 777101/3	
AI-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26	
Army, Madina 891611/15	
Queen Alia Hospital 60240050	
Amal Hospital 674155	
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323	
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071	
The Sina Hospital (09)986732	
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555	
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275	
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247100	
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111	
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.	

ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:15 Singapore, Bangkok (RJ)	
08:35 Moscow, Dubai (RJ)	
08:55 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)	
11:15 Athens, Agaba (RJ)	
18:00 Montreal, New York (RJ)	
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
13:30 Moscow (SU)	
20:35 Beirut (ME)	
23:15 Khartoum (SP)	
06:05 Bucharest (RO)	
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
09:00 Agaba (RJ)	
11:45 Istanbul, Belgrade (RJ)	
12:10 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)	
12:45 Rome, Madrid (RJ)	
13:00 Paris, London (RJ)	
13:45 Cairo (RJ)	
20:00 Jeddah (RJ)	
20:15 Damascus, Laraka (RJ)	
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
15:00 Moscow (SU)	

MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	

Jordanian delegation in Peking seeks to redress balance of trade

Jordan, China to boost ties

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and China Monday opened talks in Peking designed to boost trade and bolster economic ties between them and the two sides plan to sign agreements to serve as a mechanism for future cooperation.

The Jordanian side to the meetings is led by Minister of Planning Khaled Amin Abdullah, while the Chinese side is led by China's First Deputy Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Li Lan Ching who told his Jordanian guest that Peking sought to increase its cooperation with Jordan to all fields.

Dr. Abdullah was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying that the two sides would set up three technical committees to deal with commercial, economic and technical issues and projects. During his stay in Peking, the minister said he was planning to sign an agreement for a \$10 million Chinese loan to Jordan to be used for financing the purchase of Chinese goods to be used in Jordanian development projects.

The Jordanian side, which groups representatives of the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC), the Natural Resources Authority (NRA), the Amman chambers of commerce and industry and the Jordan National Shipping Lines, will hold extensive talks with the Chinese government officials on ways of boosting bilateral trade and economic cooperation, the minister noted.

He said that Jordan would seek to adjust the balance of trade between the two countries, which is now heavily in favour of China, by urging the Chinese to purchase more phosphate and potash from Jordan.

The minister said that his delegation would try to sign an agreement with China to buy at least 100,000 tonnes of phosphate and 400,000 tonnes of potash from the Kingdom during 1991. During his stay in Peking, the minister said he also hoped to sign a Jordanian-Chinese cultural agreement and one to promote cooperation in the field of science and technology.

An agreement was reached here last August providing for China to grant Jordan a \$10 million loan to help finance a number of development projects to the Kingdom. The agreement was signed then by Li Lan Ching and Dr. Abdullah.

According to Ministry of Industry and Trade officials, China last year imported 250,000 tonnes of potash and was expected to purchase 400,000 tonnes this year.

At the opening session in Peking, the Chinese official said that since His Majesty King Hussein's visit to China, in 1981, during which a trade agreement was signed, bilateral cooperation continued to progress.

Sabri appointed RJ vice president

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dr. Majdi Sabri has been appointed Royal Jordanian (RJ) vice president for commercial operations as of April 21.

Before joining RJ in the early eighties, Sabri worked as head of the planning department at the Civil Aviation Authority.

JMA head says raise in doctors' charge reasonable

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — President of the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA) Dr. Mamdouh Al Abbadi Monday moved to deny all rumours about reported excessive increases in the rate of charges of private doctors and specialists as well as private hospitals in the Kingdom noting that a slight increase in these charges has occurred after nearly nine years.

"The official index of rates for medical examination and hospitalisation were raised earlier this year by only 15 per cent, marking the first increase in the country since 1982, and the private medical charges are still regarded as far lower than those in force in neighbouring countries, like Syria, Iraq and Egypt, although the standard of living in this country is far higher than in any of these countries," Dr. Abbadi told the Jordan Times.

He said that a specialist fee for medical examination used to range between JD 4 to JD 7 in 1982, and now it has been increased from JD 5 to JD 8, a general practitioner's fee ranges between JD 2 to JD 4, up from JD 1.5 to JD 3 in 1982.

Dr. Abbadi denied reports in the local press that rates increased by up to 60 per cent in some cases and said that all doctors and specialists adhere to a set of rates which is distributed to them by the JMA. He added that patients should be informed about the charges by the physicians and specialists as well as hospitals before treatment.

He said that each doctor or hospital should clearly display the charges rate.

Columnists in the local press strongly criticised the increase in the rate of charges and called on the Ministry of Health to intervene and stop JMA from imposing extra charges at a time when, they said, a large sector of the Jordanian population has difficulty in making both ends meet.

Officials at the Health Ministry said that several complaints had been received from the members of the public about the increases in rates, which took effect with the start of 1991.

Dr. Tawfiq Lobani, head of the ministry's Medical Affairs Department, told the Jordan Times that it was not up to the ministry to interfere since the sole authority in setting the charges rates lies with JMA, in accordance with a law issued two years ago.

Dr. Lobani said that the ministry, however, had the right to look into technical issues like the availability of sufficient nurses, operation rooms, medical equipment and medicine in the private and public hospitals in Jordan.

According to the latest set of medical examination and hospitalisation rates distributed by the JMA there was only a rise of 15 per cent but, according to ministry officials, public complaints indicated that a majority of specialists were charging much more. Dr. Abbadi contends that some well-known specialists tend to charge the higher rather than the lower rates while the new doctors accept the minimum rates. He said that the 15 per cent increase was quite reasonable and justifiable after nine years in view of the rise in the prices of all medical equipment and medical services worldwide.

New department in charge of municipalities

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment plans to create a new department, to be known as the department of steering and guidance, in the course of the ongoing reorganisation of the ministry's various departments and their functions, according to Minister of Municipal Affairs Mohammad Addoub Al Zaben.

He said in a statement that the new department would be authorised to take charge of directing municipal councils' affairs with regard to services.

"At the same time, the ministry is now drawing up a comprehensive long-term programme designed to upgrade the qualifications and efficiency of the departments officials as well as that of

employees of various local councils," the minister said.

Mr. Zaben was addressing a meeting attended by heads of the ministry departments and inspectors appointed to serve in various governorates.

Among the main topics discussed at the meeting was the creation of joint councils' services which could be served by one development unit headed by an engineer and could improve the system of collecting dues from the local communities to finance improvements.

The minister said he would be holding a series of meetings in various governorates with the participation of heads of local councils to review their regions' projects and to discuss the question of joint councils' services.



Prime Minister Mudar Badran Monday holds talks with officials of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing (Petra photo)

Nigeria appreciates Jordan's stand during and after Gulf crisis, hopes to bolster ties — minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday received a message from Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida delivered at the Royal Court by Nigerian Oil Minister Jibrin Aminoo.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that the audience was attended by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabet Al Taher, but did not disclose the contents of the message.

Earlier, Mr. Aminoo was received at the Royal Court by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan who discussed with the visitor Jordanian-Nigerian brotherly ties, Middle East problems in the wake of the Gulf war and ways for cooperation among the countries of the region in the reconstruction process.

Prince Hassan also stressed the need for the Palestinian people to be involved in the search for just solutions to the Palestine problem and talked about the ordeal of the Palestinian people following their exodus from Kuwait.

He said that nearly 250,000 Palestinian expatriates had left Kuwait during the Gulf crisis, losing their savings and other property.

The Nigerian minister paid tribute to Jordan's stand and to King Hussein's policies in trying to save the region from wars and devastation. He voiced Nigeria's apprehension over the horrible consequences of the Gulf war and their effect on the Islamic nations and the world at large.

Crown Prince Hassan called for continued consultations among Islamic nations to find common ground for joint action in such issues as the holy city of Jerusalem, which is sacred to all Muslims.

The minister of energy and mineral resources was present at the meeting.

Mr. Aminoo, who is on a tour of the region, made a statement at the airport before his departure for Saudi Arabia and Iran voicing his country's appreciation of Jordan's stand during the Gulf crisis and Jordan's relentless efforts to give care and refuge to the evacuees flooding the country as a result of the crisis.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, shortly before his departure, Mr. Aminoo said he shared the views of Prince Hassan and supported his call for expanding the scope of cooperation between the two countries. Describing Nigeria's ties with

Jordan as very strong and based on mutual cooperation and friendship, Mr. Aminoo said that his country hoped to strengthen all ties with the Kingdom, especially in the academic, scientific, informational and cultural fields, including exchange of expertise and visits by students since, he said, Jordan is considered as one of the most developed nations of the region.

Asked on the prospect of Nigerian-Jordanian cooperation in petroleum, he said that talks with his Jordanian counterpart Thabet Al Taher dealt with bolstering cooperation in the petroleum industry.

Nigeria is an oil producing country and member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Nigeria hopes that Jordan will be helped to become an oil and gas producing country as well, the minister noted.

He said that his visit was part of a tour of the countries in the region with messages to their leaders from the Nigerian president.

Premier advises careful planning of road projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — Due consideration to national interests and careful feasibility studies for road projects in the country should be taken into account, before final decisions on projects can be made, with a view to reducing cost of projects to a minimum, Prime Minister Mudar Badran said Monday.

Addressing a meeting at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the prime minister said that every possible effort should be made to "reduce the sufferings of travellers on the roads," and every endeavour should be taken to ensure continued flow of traffic on all roads in the best interest of the national economy.

When planning for new roads, the prime minister said, every care should be taken to make use of the old roads within the new projects so that Jordan can benefit from earlier investments in public transport and road projects.

At the meeting, which was attended by Minister of Public Works Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh and ministry officials, a general review was made of the obstacles impeding the ministry's projects and measures taken to overcome problems.

Mr. Badran urged the ministry to speed up work on those roads which have an economic priority and which, he said, can reduce inconvenience to citizens and travellers.

The prime minister asked that a road from Ras Nagab to the Aqaba junction be widened to include four lanes so that it can facilitate the transportation of phosphate and potash to Aqaba for export.

With reference to the question of axial weights on roads, the prime minister urged officials to give due attention to the subject and to take into account economic aspects, when applying the law, with a view to ensuring continued national economic progress.

The Ministry of Public Works has recently enforced the axial weights law, which limits the weight of loads on each truck running on Jordanian roads. The move was taken in view of the damage to the roads, resulting from excessive weights, and to open the door for more trucks to run since many of them have been lying idle during the Gulf crisis.

Mr. Rawabdeh and ministry

officials briefed the prime minister on the 1991 roads and buildings projects in the Kingdom and on those given priority in the coming years.

The meeting discussed arrangements for offering training to new engineers on projects being carried out in various parts of the country.

In a separate development, the prime minister issued a communique Monday urging all government departments and public institutions in Jordan to facilitate the job of teams from the Civil Service Commission (CSC) who will be touring the country in the first week of the coming month to gather information to be used in the reorganisational plans of the civil service system in Jordan.

The prime minister said that the CSC last year embarked on reorganising government departments, with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and said cooperation with the teams was needed at this juncture to ensure the success of the plan.

The prime minister's circular said that government departments had been divided into sectors to facilitate the teams' work.

IPU meeting to discuss world security, proliferation of arms

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is taking part in the 85th meeting of the Interparliamentary Union (IPU), which is due to open in North Korea Monday, to discuss the non-proliferation of mass destruction weapons and world security.

The Jordanian delegation, which is due to leave for Pyongyang Tuesday, is led by member of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Obeidat and groups two members from the Lower House and parliamentary officials.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that Mr. Obeidat would deliver Jordan's address at the meeting to review the country's

strides towards democratic rule as well as Jordan's stand vis-a-vis developments in the Middle East region.

Mr. Obeidat said that the six-day meeting would discuss the non-proliferation of nuclear arms and ways to end the arms race as well as means of putting an end to acts of violence directed against children and women, among other important issues.

Mr. Obeidat, a former prime minister who chairs the Jordanian Society for the Protection of the Environment from Pollution, last February addressed a symposium here on the dangers of the Gulf war, warning against the use of nuclear, bacteriological or chemical weapons in that war because of their catastrophic consequences to mankind.

Mr. Obeidat told the meeting that half a million scientists around the world were involved in research work, designed to improve arms and mass destruction weapons, on which billions of dollars are being spent, far exceeding allocations for improving the quality of human life.

He said that while nearly \$1,000 billion is spent annually on the military, the world — mostly the poor countries — continues to suffer from lack of clean, potable water which, according to statistics, is responsible for 80 per cent of the world's diseases.

Freed journalists arrive from Baghdad

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three French journalists released by Iraqi authorities have arrived in Amman and are scheduled to fly home Saturday, a Jordanian relief official said Monday.

"The three French nationals arrived in Amman at midnight Sunday, and the French embassy is arranging for their departure home on Saturday," Dr. Mohammad Al Hadid, deputy president of the Jordan Red Crescent Society, told reporters.

Dr. Hadid said the three — Antenne 2 correspondent Richard Binet, soundman Didier Dahan and Fabrice Briand — were handed over to Abdul Halim Al Sanousi, a representative of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in Baghdad by the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. The Jordan Red Crescent brought them to Amman.

The journalists, who were arrested by Iraqi security forces in southern Iraq on April 9 while on their way from Saudi Arabia to the southern Iraqi town of Nasiriyah, were to address a press conference in Amman Monday, but the event was called off at the last minute.

According to Dr. Hadid, the release of the three, who could have been charged with illegal entry to Iraq, was ordered by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

None of the three could be located for comment on their ordeal in Iraq. All of them are in good physical condition, Dr. Hadid said.

"Even if the press conference were held, they would not have discussed any details of their detention or prison conditions in Iraq," Dr. Hadid said.

He said they wanted to hold a press conference "only to thank the Iraqi Red Crescent, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the Jordan Red Crescent Society for helping them."

Mr. Binet, the correspondent, told reporters in Baghdad they were picked up by Iraqi soldiers while they were

trying to get into Nasiriyah, "where we heard there was some fighting."

He said they thought they were in American-controlled territory and might have lost their way and ran into their captors.

Nasiriyah was the site of battles between Iraqi soldiers and Shiite Muslims who rebelled against the Iraqi government immediately after the Gulf war ended in late February.

But there was no report of any fighting in the town after March, when Iraqi government soldiers put down the rebellion.

The three French journalists were first taken to an Iraqi army base near Safwan, a town straddling the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border, and then to Baghdad where they spent five days in a house outside the capital and a few days in jail before being released, Mr. Binet told reporters in Baghdad earlier this week.

The Frenchmen were the latest journalists to be detained and released by Iraqi authorities after the Gulf war.

Two others, American freelance Frank Smyth and Vietnamese French photographer Alain Buu, were freed last week after being caught in northern Iraq later March following the Iraqi army's recapture of the region following a Kurdish revolt there.

Mr. Smyth and Mr. Buu told reporters in Amman that German Gad Gross, a photographer on a Newsweek assignment, was shot dead by Iraqi soldiers near the northern town of Kirkuk on March 29.

British freelance cameraman Nick Della Casa, his wife Loraine, and her brother Charles Maxwell remain missing in Iraq since April 2, according to the British Foreign Office.

The three were last seen by an American journalist on April 2 near Zakho, on the Iraqi-Turkish border, heading towards Kirkuk.

Iraqi officials have not publicly commented on any of the missing journalists.

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Peace and all that jazz

THE MUSLIM Brotherhood movement in Jordan has denounced U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's extensive effort in the Middle East as a ploy to subjugate the Umma (Islamic nation) and make its people pass time by running after a mirage of peaceful solutions. It may well be. In fact even those who peg their political thinking to pacifist ideologies are having trouble understanding what Mr. Baker is trying to do short of pressuring his client state, Israel to accept international legitimacy and U.N. resolutions. The calm and collected secretary of state has appeared in different poses and settings to tell the Arabs about the benefits of a peace process and to rid themselves of old taboos. We may be inclined to believe he is right. Our history of concessions and wallowing in what many, especially the Brotherhood, consider taboos has become symptomatic of our behaviour vis-a-vis the Palestine problem. But who is clinging to clichés and taboos? The Arabs started by asking for all of Palestine, then the West Bank and Gaza Strip to safeguard the identity of the millions of Palestinians scattered around the world; they have renounced "terrorism," recognised the state of Israel, accepted the U.S. as a broker, gave up on the idea of a U.N. conference and expressed willingness to attend a peace conference without "international," and what did they get in return? Another lesson about taboos. His Majesty the King said that he had a dream about ending this tragic situation and we are behind him. We also have a dream. During Secretary Baker's visit to the occupied territories it was reported that an Arab man shouted out of a window "we want bread but without blood." What more proof does the secretary want of our dream, our mirage of a peaceful solution?

Yet Mr. Baker still insists on spending hours among our leaders telling them of Israeli dreams and fears. How could anyone claim that the U.S. has changed colours when the secretary says that his country cannot force peace on Israel when a recent example in Iraq shows us that the superpower can impose its will in the name of so called peace? The questions are many and the answers are confusing to those of us who have tried to "negotiate" and add credibility to what "radicals" have come to describe as "stripping" for the West. As Mr. Baker prepares to visit Israel again this Wednesday he should remember that he is negotiating a solution for the problem of the Palestinians, a people who have lived in refugee camps and the diaspora for years awaiting the application of international legitimacy, and not for a state that has held hundreds of thousands prisoner in their homes. Mr. Baker should remember that he is supposed to be an honest broker between the oppressed and the oppressor and not a spokesman for the state of Israel. Settlements continue to be built, immigrants continue to move into Palestinian lands while the U.S. worries about the state of affairs inside the Israeli cabinet and the Jewish lobby's influence on U.S. elections and all that jazz. If attention is not immediately and genuinely directed to the plight of the Arabs in this sorry state of affairs then perhaps the Umma will have no choice but to abandon their peace crusade and start looking at reality as it really is.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

In its editorial Monday Al Ra'i Arabic daily warned that the Israeli government was stalling for time and procrastinating over the implementation of pertinent U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Middle East question. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's talks with the Israeli leaders did not achieve anything, and reports from Israel suggested that the Israeli prime minister was inclined to reject all the American ideas for settlement, said the paper. This is a dangerous development and reminds the world the fact that Israel has always resorted to such tactics to escape the peace process, the paper noted. It said that Shamir and his government are clearly aiming to stall for time until the American presidential elections and the parliament elections in Israel during which nothing can be done and no decision can be passed. Baker has reportedly warned the Israelis that he might resort to the United Nations if he failed in his attempt to get the peace-making process moving, and should this happen, said the paper, it would indeed be a courageous step on the part of the U.S. administration because it would place Israel face to face with the world community whose resolutions have long been waiting to be implemented. The paper warned the U.S. Secretary of falling in the trap of Israel's procrastinations and stalling.

A columnist in Al Dustour daily raised the question of soaring bills which patients have to pay to the private doctors and hospitals in Jordan. Mohammad Daoudieh says a recent system approved by the Jordanian Medical Association and endorsed by the Ministry of Health has raised doctors' fees by 60-100 per cent, making it impossible for poor families to get medical attention from the private doctors and specialists at a time when government hospitals and doctors cannot cope with the increasing demand on medical services. The writer calls on the Health Ministry and the Medical Association to rescind the new measures and to remember that medical treatment is a humanitarian duty in the first place, and to remember that the country is passing through difficult economic circumstances, with a large sector of the population barely able to make both ends meet. For a needy family receiving medical assistance is a real ordeal, because this would deprive its members of the other basic needs like food, clothing and education, the writer continues. With the unemployment growing all the time and the cost of living rising by 62 per cent, members of the public find it almost impossible to benefit from good medical services if the new system is to be applied, he noted. One sure way of overcoming the present difficulty for the needy people on the one hand, and appeasing the medical association and the Jordanian doctors on the other, the writer concludes, is the application of a comprehensive health insurance scheme which, the writer says, is bound to ensure medical services for all citizens at very reasonable cost.

Palestinians in Kuwait: victims of conflict

By Shafeeq Ghabra

DURING the early period of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, the Palestinian community there was divided. Most were convinced from the outset that the invasion was a disaster. The Palestinian community in Kuwait was the richest of the diaspora and included high government officials, bankers, administrators, entrepreneurs, engineers, teachers and doctors. But another segment could not believe that Iraq had ill intentions, and with its pan-Arab ideology, must be working for the good of the Arab Nation. Some also believe that any change in the status quo in the Middle East had to be good. These feelings were enhanced by the fact that Palestinians received better treatment than Kuwaitis at checkpoints during the early weeks.

But Palestinian-Kuwaiti ties were damaged by the PLO's actions at the beginning of the crisis, including Arafat's meeting with Saddam two days after the invasion and the PLO's vote against the Aug. 10 Arab summit resolutions. And while PLO leaders such as Khalid and Hani Al Hasan and Jawid Al Ghassayn condemned the invasion, a stream of others, including Farouk Khadumi, Yasser Abed Rabho and Mohammad Abbas, appeared on Iraqi television (seen by everyone in Kuwait) expressing solidarity with Iraq. There was no mention of human rights violations, and indeed the question of the invasion of Kuwait was only raised in connection with proposals linking it to other unsolved issues in the region.

After the Aug. 10 Cairo summit, Fateh activists in Kuwait took an independent stand, distributing leaflets on four occasions strongly criticising the occupation and the behaviour of the Iraqis. It was this that spurred the Iraqi administration to send some 200-400 members of the Iraqi sponsored Palestinian organisation,

the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), to Kuwait to intimidate and control the Palestinian community and the local PLO. ALF members, mainly from Iraq, were assigned to checkpoints and police stations. Strong protests were made to the PLO headquarters in Tunis and as a result the ALF was withdrawn from the checkpoints, but it continued to intimidate Palestinians and Kuwaitis.

However as the occupation continued, the role of the ALF was strengthened and it was joined by 400 members of Mohammad Abbas' Palestine Liberation Front (PLF). In addition, the Iraqi controlled Palestine Liberation Army sent in some 400 soldiers. It thus became apparent that Iraq was determined to impose on the Palestinian community an anti-Kuwaiti and pro-Iraqi stand. These developments added to the rising tensions between Kuwaitis and Palestinians.

Furthermore, during January all the PLO organisations met in Baghdad and decided to encourage Kuwaiti Palestinian organisations to join the Iraqi "popular army" in Kuwait. Several hundred individuals from the community were issued weapons and identity cards stating that they were members of the "popular army." This group, made up mostly of poor individuals, joined up in order to be allowed to move freely about the country to avoid queuing for bread and gas. They were paid 105 dinars a month. But the leadership of Fateh in Kuwait and many of its members refused to obey the instructions from the organisation in Baghdad. As a result, the Fateh leader in Kuwait, Rafiq Qiblawi, was assassinated on Jan. 18.

An issue that exacerbated tensions between Kuwaitis and Palestinians was the work boycott. Of the Palestinians

who remained in Kuwait, at least 70 per cent observed the boycott, including all those involved in the private sector. But for poorer Palestinians, the fear of losing their savings and pensions was great, especially since many had to make up the loss of income from family members employed in the private sector. They were also vulnerable to the threat of deportation. Thus many government employees signed in at their work places in September, although few did any significant work. Some destroyed documents and sabotaged computers to prevent the Iraqis from using them.

Palestinian-Kuwaiti cooperation

But despite the tensions there was considerable cooperation between Kuwaitis and Palestinians. In mixed residential quarters, neighbours helped each other, sharing food and other necessities. Some local PLO activists made secret contacts with the Kuwaiti resistance and helped Kuwaiti volunteers to move food secretly from warehouses to Kuwaiti cooperatives. Ali Al Hasan, a leading light in the Palestinian community (he is a brother of Khalid and Hani Al Hasan in Tunis), was a key link to the Kuwaiti Islamic movement and played a pivotal role in providing relief to many Palestinian families during the occupation. His attempts to mend bridges between Palestinians and Kuwaitis met with Iraqi interference. Fifteen of his young Palestinian supporters, who helped provide food and support to Kuwaitis, were arrested in September on charges of being members of the resistance; almost all of them were executed after a month in jail. Ali Al Hasan himself was interrogated three times about his help to the resistance.

There were other examples of cooperation between the two communities. Palestinians

helped keep the electricity and water systems running, and with their Kuwaiti colleagues, to maintain essential medical services. They also worked as volunteers alongside Kuwaitis in bakeries and other services. Dozens of Palestinians took part in the Kuwaiti resistance, which continued throughout the occupation period, albeit since October at a lower intensity. They were involved in hiding weapons and explosives and transporting them to the resistance. When the militants who carried out one of the most successful operations in October, damaging an Iraqi airliner carrying many servicemen and the leader of the National Guard, as it left the airport, were arrested, they turned out to be from a mixed Kuwaiti-Palestinian cell. Many of the resistance rings rounded up since October had both Kuwaiti and Palestinian members.

As a result, the Iraqi education ministry fired 3,000 Palestinian teachers during the latter part of September, and the dismissals of Palestinians from other sectors continued throughout October. The Iraqis also put pressure on the PLO office in Kuwait, which had refused to organise any Palestinian demonstrations or rallies in support of Iraq. (The only Palestinian demonstration, three days after the invasion, was pro-Kuwait, with inhabitants of the Hawalli quarter waving photos of the emir). During October the Iraqi authorities asked the PLO representative in Kuwait to leave the country. On several occasions between September and December the military governor of Kuwait, Ali Hasan Al Majid, summoned PLO representatives in Kuwait and accused them of being followers of the Sabah family.

But in September and October, large numbers of Palestinians began to leave. In addition to the fear of arrest, and their mistreatment at road

blocks by Iraqis, food shortages were becoming serious and medical care difficult. Kuwaitis and Palestinians alike were penniless. They were forced to sell their cars and electrical appliances at improvised markets to anyone who had cash, even to Iraqi civilians coming from Iraq to buy on the cheap. Thus by December Kuwait's Palestinian population had dwindled from a pre-invasion strength of 350,000 to approximately 150,000.

Liberation and its aftermath

The liberation of Kuwait brought immediate fears of vengeance. Many Kuwaitis in exile believed that most of the Palestinians who stayed in Kuwait had cooperated with the Iraqis and reflected the PLO's policy. To Kuwaitis, the ALF and PLF men represented the Palestinian dimension of their oppression by the Iraqis. In such an atmosphere, and despite the fact that the majority of Palestinians are innocent civilians who were also terrorised by the Iraqi occupation, mutual distrust flourishes. This is exactly what makes the present situation difficult and complex. While many Kuwaitis under occupation had positive experiences of Palestinians, others did not.

During the first few days of liberation there were cases of Palestinians being victimised and arrested by armed groups and the Kuwaiti army after it arrived. At checkpoints Palestinians were singled out, vilified and sometimes beaten or arrested. The Middle East Watch report of March 21 states that since the liberation 30-40 people have been executed, often after torture, of whom several were Palestinians. On the other hand members of the Kuwaiti resistance

tried to explain to the incoming army that the majority of Palestinians in Kuwait were neither collaborators nor pro-Iraqi. Some even saved Palestinians being beaten at checkpoints. Ali Al Hasan, whose house was set on fire after he survived an attempt on his life, has now been provided with Kuwaiti guards around the clock.

Slowly a situation of uncertain normality is evolving between Palestinians and Kuwaitis. Palestinians, having responded to a call by the government, are again working in electricity, water, telephone and medical installations. Palestinian employees of the ministry of public works and the ministry of information have been asked to return. A director of the National Bank of Kuwait has assured all Palestinian employees they will be called back to work soon. Relations at the work sites are reported normal; the amount of work to be done is overwhelming.

Yet tensions and fears continue. Several armed Kuwaiti groups, acting on their own, appear to be still operating in the city, arresting individuals and dealing out their own form of justice. The prime minister has given strict orders to the army to behave well, and has threatened to hang those who commit acts of vengeance. While Kuwait is coming to grips with the devastation left by the Iraqis, the rebuilding of the country is a complex process that will be far more difficult than its liberation. In this context it is unclear what the future of the Palestinian community is. Much will depend on the path Kuwait chooses concerning democracy and human rights. — Middle East International.

Dr. Shafeeq Ghabra, a professor of political science at Kuwait University, is author of *Palestinians in Kuwait*. He is a Kuwaiti citizen of Palestinian origin. He escaped from occupied Kuwait towards the end of October, and is currently a visiting professor at William and Mary College in Virginia. He returned briefly to Kuwait on March 13.

Aqaba talks improved bilateral ties

(Continued from page 1)

guarantee for its Arab neighbours of secure borders for Israel. But Israel considers its 1970 Camp David agreement with Egypt and the return of the Sinai desert to Egypt as the maximum concessions Israelis could make towards peace.

U.S. President George Bush has said that any proposed peace conference would necessarily be based on a land-for-peace formula, a statement that was welcomed by Arab states but sharply criticised by the right-wing government of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

"Israel rejects our interpretation of the resolutions and Mr. Baker did not sound as if he was going to pressure Israel on this issue," the Jordanian official said in reference to the U.S. secretary's claim that no party or state could impose peace in the region unless the parties concerned expressed their wish to find peace.

However, the Jordanian official pointed out that the most important element of the peace talks between His Majesty King Hussein and Mr. Baker was that "the Jordanian side felt that the Americans are serious about this peace process," adding that that "made us a little more optimistic at least in that regard."

According to the official, Mr. Baker had indicated in his talks here that he wanted to avoid confrontation with Mr. Shamir's government over the issue of settlements although the U.S. stuck to its opposition

to the Israeli policy.

Mr. Baker was reportedly told by Israeli leaders he met last Friday and on earlier trips that at least six cabinet ministers would resign their posts if Mr. Shamir moved to stop Jewish settlement on the occupied West Bank.

"Mr. Baker wanted us to leave the issue of settlements until the different parties to the conflict sat down at the negotiating table," the Jordanian official said. But, he added, the U.S. secretary was not able to promise the Jordanian side that the settlements would be stopped when negotiations begin.

"It is clear that they (Americans) will do their utmost to reach a solution, but they could not promise anything," the official said. "Their argument is that if the taboos were broken and different parties were brought to the negotiating table these issues would be addressed properly."

At a brief press conference after the Aqaba talks Mr. Baker said that the U.S. disagreed with the Israeli settlement policy and considered it "an obstacle to peace."

He told reporters that the problem could be handled only through a peace process. "We badly need a peace process," he said.

Officials and observers said that Jordan would adopt a wait-and-see policy on the American approach if only to highlight Israeli intransigence and probably also for lack of other alternatives and initiatives. "We are looking with

open mind at everything," the King told reporters after meeting Mr. Baker.

In fact Jordan entered the brief talks with the Americans already decided not to discuss details of how to proceed towards peace to avoid being labelled as "reactionists" on the U.S.-peace efforts in the Middle East. "We avoided details of our demands during our meeting with Mr. Baker," the senior official said.

Informed sources told the Jordan Times that generally the meeting between Foreign Minister Taher Masri and Mr. Baker in Geneva on April 12 dealt with more details on the peace process than the Aqaba meeting did.

An important bone of contention between Israel and Jordan which was not addressed during the Aqaba talks was the issue of the objective of the proposed peace conference, the sources said.

"We will not attend a conference that is only held on the theoretical basis of (resolutions) 242 and 338. It has to be held to implement those resolutions," the official said. "There is a difference between 'on the basis of' and 'to implement' the U.N. resolutions," he said.

In general, the sources said, the Aqaba meeting laid the groundwork for the inevitable give and take with the Americans in the future, by ensuring that bilateral relations are solid enough to withstand any differences on important issues concerning the peace process.

PCC meets

(Continued from page 1)

issued a joint statement on Sunday openly condemning the PLO leadership.

They attacked the leadership for authorising a meeting in occupied Jerusalem last Saturday between Mr. Baker and a delegation of three Palestinians.

Mr. Arafat has expressed dissatisfaction with the Baker plan but stopped short of condemning it outright.

The hardliners are expected to call on the council to reject a peace conference plan and demand a halt to Palestinian talks outside the PLO framework.

They also disapproved of proposals for a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to any peace conference to get round Israel's refusal to talk to the PLO.

It's as simple as ABC

By John Law

WHY IS IT that pundit after pundit looks at the Arab-Israeli conflict, shakes his head and moans at the "complexity" of a dispute that appears to be "insoluble"? Why has this view become the conventional wisdom of even the non-experts?

Actually, understanding what is needed for a solution is as simple as ABC. There is no need to go through all of the conflict's history in order to arrive at the "givens," which are as follows.

— The government of Israel has made it clear, with specific declarations, that it does not intend to give up control of the West Bank and Gaza, both of which it captured during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

— The representative of the Palestinians, the PLO, has made it clear, with specific declarations, that it recognises Israel within its 1967 borders, and would like Israel to agree to recognise an independent Palestinian state within the borders of the West Bank and Gaza.

— Neither side will compromise its position regarding sovereignty over territory. Israel wants 100 per cent of what used to be British Mandate Palestine, the Palestinians are ready to settle for 22 per cent of it, but no less.

— Israel has the upper hand in its ability to maintain its position against compromise, because it has soldiers occupying the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinians do not have any soldiers occupying any part of Israel.

— Short-term prospects that the Palestinians could win their state by force — particularly now that Iraq has crumbled — are exceedingly bleak. An intensified guerrilla war in the occupied territories might cause some attention to Israel's position, but at the best could only pay off in the very long term. In the meantime, Israel might make it much more difficult for the guerrillas by "transferring" the Palestinian population to Jordan.

— The U.S. administration is determined to follow through on one more effort to attain a solution to an Arab-Israeli conflict that it believes is dangerous for the peace of the world. This time the effort is to be on "two tracks": negotiations with the Arab countries to get them to recognise Israel, along with the usual attempt to reach a meeting of minds between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

— Working to get the Arab countries to recognise Israel is a waste of time. The Arab countries have always been ready to recognise Israel if Israel makes a deal that is satisfactory to the Palestinians. So why not just focus on that? The rest will take care of itself.

— Making suggestions to Israel that fall short of asking it to allow the Palestinians to have an independent state of their own, just as the Israelis have, is also a waste of time. Furthermore, making any kind of suggestions to Israel, as previous experience has shown, will be meaningless, because Israel will accept only the ones it wishes to accept.

— The only action that could provide any hope at all of convincing Israel to compromise with the Palestinians on the basis of a "two-state" solution, with internationally enforced security guarantees, would be for the administration to tell Yitzhak Shamir that Israel will not receive any further American funding until it does. There would be nothing to stop President Bush from doing this if he really wanted to. "Although Congress can appropriate the money, it cannot force the administration to spend it."

— Chances that the administration will take this step in the foreseeable future are, unfortunately, very slim — perhaps non-existent. Recent statements from Secretary of State James Baker seem to imply a desire to reinvent the wheel. Here we are, 24 years since the take-over of the occupied territories, and we hear Mr. Baker tell reporters not to anticipate too much progress for the time being, because "we must crawl before we can walk, walk before we can run." Unfortunately he did not sound as if he were joking.

— In any case, if the step is not taken, the status quo is sure to continue, and this would mean an indefinite continuation of violence in the region. Surely this is not so "complex" a deduction that it should befuddle pundits. And because meaningful pressure on Israel has never been tried before, there is still reason to hope that the situation is not "insoluble." In fact, as I see it, I have solved it while using less than half of the alphabet! — Middle East International, London.

French, Britons join marines

(Continued from page 1)

The first camp inside Iraq on Saturday after allied task force commander Lieutenant General John Shalikashvili asked Iraqi forces to quit the Zakho area.

"There has been no major difficulty. It has been going better than we expected," a U.S. marine spokesman told reporters in Zakho, now under effective allied control, on Monday.

The U.S. commander of the marine force in Iraq, Lieutenant Colonel Jay Garner, was due to meet an Iraqi brigadier-general Monday to demand the removal of 200 armed police who arrived in Zakho the previous day in violation of a U.S.-Iraqi accord.

"Our information is that the Iraqi police will not be a major concern," the marine spokesman said. Iraqi troops had left the area and U.S. marines had deployed unopposed.

Two U.S. soldiers were injured Monday by a land mine at a refugee camp on the Turkish-Iraqi border, military officials said. The border had been mined by both Iraq and Turkey before the Gulf war.

At a camp near Cukurca, an Iraqi Kurdish refugee was shot and killed and at least five others injured by Turkish troops who opened fire to quell a food riot on Sunday. Several other refugees have died in similar disturbances

this month. Relief officials said most of the estimated 800,000 refugees on the Turkish border have been fed by the international relief effort, but lack sufficient water, medical care and sanitation.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said the situation remains critical for the estimated one million Kurdish refugees who crossed into Iran after fleeing the southern rebellion. Those refugees are being cared for principally by Iran.

Mr. De Courten said the ICRC was also striving to provide shelter and food for 200,000 of the refugees in Iran.

Human tragedies rampant in war-ravaged Iraq

By Sana Atiyeh

The writer has recently returned from a three-week working visit to Iraq.

ABU IMAN, an Iraqi journalist, accidentally saw his two daughters in a street in the northern city of Erbil a few days after the Iraqi troops recaptured the city from the Kurdish rebels last month. He hugged and kissed his daughters with disbelief as he was not so hopeful of finding them so quickly and in such a way. They were waiting for any vehicle that could take them back to the city of Kirkuk, more than 100 kilometres to the south.

Abu Iman's daughters had fled to Kirkuk along with his sister and her daughters when the U.S.-led allied bombardment on Iraq began on Jan. 17. He had not seen or heard from them for the entire six weeks of the war.

No sooner had he felt relieved that the allied war had come to an end, than news spread that several northern Iraqi cities had been occupied by Kurdish rebels, including Kirkuk.

Soon after the government forces recaptured the city, the Iraqi Information Ministry decided to take visiting journalists to Kirkuk and Abu Iman would now be able to look for them, in the hope they were safe. In Kirkuk, Abu Iman was told by neighbours that his family had fled to the north. He did not know how they fled because gasoline had not reached the north for more than two weeks during the Kurds' occupation of the area. (The government is in charge of distributing the fuel and basic food commodities to its citizens at low subsidised prices).

Two days later, journalists

went to Erbil and as the convoy of cars carrying the reporters was leaving the city to go back to Baghdad, Abu Iman was happily surprised when he saw that his daughters, sister and nieces were among those who sat on the side of the road waiting for transport to go back home.

Fortunately, Abu Iman had access to cars and was able to bring them back to Baghdad. When asked if he would be interviewed about his story the following day, Abu Iman just said: "It's too difficult to talk about now. I feel so shocked by what happened. Do you know that they walked for days only to have slept in a cave in the mountains for a week without food?"

Abu Iman's story is only one in thousands of similar tragic incidents that have befallen the Iraqi people as a result of the war.

Although the U.S. and its allies brag about their precision bombing during the six-week war, where civilian casualties were kept to a minimum in relation to the amount of bombs dropped on Baghdad, it is the civilian population that continues to pay a heavy price. The "surgical bombing" had succeeded in damaging the sensitive nerve of the livelihood of the people.

"How can we show that the U.S. bombardment of our country was so uncivilised when the civilians who had directly died from the war were less than one would have expected?" an Iraqi asked. "They should know that by destroying our most sensitive nerve in our infrastructure, we live a most primitive life and

the suffering is greater than if we had died in the bombing."

The Iraqi man was referring to the allies' destruction of the power system, which has left the people without fuel, electricity, running water and telephones. Although the government has been working hard to reconstruct what had been destroyed and electricity has reached some areas of the country, as well as running water, the gasoline was rationed with coupons allowing each car 30 litres to last 20 days at low subsidised prices. (This amount was increased after the fixing of the Dura oil refinery last week, which was expected to provide 93,000 barrels of gasoline per day. The usual Iraqi consumption of gas before the war was 300,000 barrels a day). Otherwise, those who could afford to buy gasoline at a very high price could buy the fuel (mostly unclean) from the black market.

Nevertheless, most families had been greatly affected by the damaged communications and transport system. Many families were seen travelling on foot, especially in the provinces outside Baghdad in the south and north; small children crying from the pain in their feet, and babies wrapped up in blankets carried by mothers in remote areas where the next town or village could be as far as 50 kilometres away.

Crowds of people would pile up on army or civilian trucks just to get from one place to another. Women carrying babies and children were seen crying and running after a truck, tractor or bus because they were unable to get on the vehicle since it was bursting at the seams. In urban and rural areas, schoolchildren had

to wake up very early in the morning to walk for miles to reach their schools. This is besides the problem of transport for those in the medical field who had problems getting to hospitals and health centres.

"Can you believe an oil-producing country has been reduced to this primitive level? Can you believe that most people have to travel on foot to get anywhere?" was often asked by Iraqis still shaken by the war.

But the tragedy these civilians have been facing is beyond just humiliation: it has divided families who don't know where other members are and there is a constant fear of whether they are alive or dead. There certainly are no telephone lines to be assured that they might be safe and healthy.

An employee at a Baghdad hotel had not seen or heard from her parents during the war and was very worried about them when the rebellion broke out in the southern provinces of the country. They had fled to their hometown in the south away from the heavy bombardment against Baghdad. She and her sister had not heard a single word from or about them since the war stopped and the civil strife broke out.

"I don't know if they're dead or what," she told this reporter last week. "How are they going to get here with no gas or public transport?"

Almost everyone had a story to tell of how they lost track of their children, parents and friends; worry was all too evident on many faces.

More worries, however, are yet to come, with the hot Iraqi summer approaching. Those who might find their families still have to face months of

difficulties. If the power system is not quickly fixed before the summer approaches, Iraqis will find it very difficult to cope as temperatures can reach more than 50 degrees Centigrade in Baghdad and even higher in the south. This is besides the dangerous risk of the outbreak of epidemics and diseases because of lack of refrigeration for medication and scarcity of transport to reach hospitals.

Those who could normally afford to flee the hot Iraqi summers are not yet permitted by the government to travel outside Iraq and most of those who normally cool off in the north of the country in summers will not do so. They will not have enough fuel to get them there, they fear an outbreak of another Kurdish armed rebellion, and they fear the U.S. and allies might decide to start bombing again. (Many Iraqis are almost convinced that the U.S. might decide to start bombing Iraq again because of the jets that continuously fly low over the country breaking the sound barrier quite often).

The damage to the power system and the continued U.N.-imposed sanctions on Iraq will make it difficult for the government to fix everything before the summer arrives. Iraqi officials have said that lifting the sanctions and permitting Iraq to export its oil is essential to start fixing the basic infrastructure that had been destroyed. Otherwise, the Iraqi people will continue to suffer.

As one elderly Iraqi civilian put it: "If the Americans think they are punishing Saddam Hussein for invading Kuwait, they are wrong. They are only punishing us and our children."



An Iraqi soldier cries over the body of a friend killed by Kurdish rebels during the riots.

Oil fires will have only local environmental impact

By Sydney Rubin
The Associated Press

LONDON — The first scientists to fly through the smoke over Kuwait say it could cause severe local problems, including smog and acid rain, but should not alter the global climate as once feared. Nor do preliminary results from the study by the British meteorological office indicate increased destruction of the ozone layer.

"The good news on a global level is there won't be the climatic changes that some people predicted before the war," said Geoff Jenkins, leader of the flight team. "The bad news is that things may be worse than expected for the region."

Final results from the laboratory analysis are expected in about

out a month. Using Chinook helicopters and a royal air force C-130 Hercules plane outfitted with filters, flasks and lasers, the researchers flew for 57 hours, ranging up to 1,600 kilometres in flights over Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states beginning in late March.

Their initial findings, which they explained this week, provided the first detailed look at the smog, soot and acid rain that has caused health problems and contaminated soil and crops throughout the area.

Initial predictions were that smoke from blazing wellheads would rise 13 kilometres into the stratosphere, upsetting global weather patterns and disrupting India's annual monsoon rains. Prognosticators feared that

chemicals would remain suspended in the stratosphere for months, absorbing sunlight and destroying the ozone layer which shields the earth from harmful ultraviolet rays. But the research team found that most of the smoke was staying closer to earth where "sooner or later, rain will wash it down," Jenkins said.

"We saw wisps and spikes of smoke at about 18,000 feet (5,400 metres), but the solid top of the plume was at about 8,000 feet (2,400 metres)," he said. "More burning will not increase the chances of the plume getting into the atmosphere, but it will cause a great deal more acid rain."

He did not explain why the smoke had not risen as high as feared. Keith Browning, director of research at the meteorological office, said pollution from the oil fires was moving east covering up to 500 kilometres a day. He said he feared wind-borne pollution would blight agricultural land in Iran and other nations east of the Gulf where greasy acid rain has been reported for weeks.

"It is possible this disaster could... make parts of the region at least as dirty as some of the worst scenes of industrial pollution in Eastern Europe," Browning said.

Acid rain has been reported as far as 1,900 kilometres from Kuwait, extending from the Black Sea in the north to Pakistan in the east. Thick layers of soot and sludge were reported on the normally pristine mountainsides of Kashmir in early April.

Richard D. Small, director of thermal sciences at the Los Angeles-based Pacific Sierra Research Corp., said plants, animals and people living beneath the plume would suffer long-term damage.

Small, who has been studying the plume for the U.S. Defence Department, told an international gathering of scientists in Colchester, England, this week that the wells were releasing 11,500 metric tonnes of black smoke a day. "The helicopter dropped us in the middle of a field and you were surrounded by total darkness. The bright fires gave off intense heat. From the air, whole sections of Kuwait were in total darkness at midday," he said.

The team measured smoke clouds for levels of carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide, two of the leading "greenhouse gases" that warm the earth by trapping heat. They also tested for heavy hydrocarbons and sulphur dioxide, the cause of acid rain.

The level of soot was about 30

times above the level of a fairly polluted city. More disturbing was the discovery that the soot particles above the plumes were smaller than expected. Nearly the ground, particles that size "can easily pass into the lungs," Jenkins said.

Doctors in Ahmadi, adjacent to Kuwait's Burgan oil field, have reported an increase in eczema, dermatitis, conjunctivitis and respiratory ailments, even in healthy adults.

It was not clear whether the medical problems were the result of water or air pollution, or other causes. Samples of the soot are being analysed in London.

It is too early to tell how much more soot, sulphur and gas will be spewed into the air, since there is widespread disagreement about the volume of oil burning and how long it will take to snuff the fires.

Kuwaiti officials have said 510 wellheads are burning about six million barrels of oil a day. The British research team said that evidence supports lower estimates by some oil experts of about two million barrels a day.

The carbon dioxide emitted by two million barrels of oil a day would represent about three per cent of the world's daily consumption. A barrel is 42 gallon (160 litres).

Kuwaiti activists 'gagged'

(Continued from page 1)

that cannot be accepted." Apart from the Sabahs, it contained only technocrats and academics with no popular base, it said. The alliance had demanded a broad-based national unity government including Kuwaitis who had campaigned for greater democracy before the Iraqi invasion of August 1990.

Mr. Nisf, who resigned from the government after six days in 1985 "because I refused to be a rubber stamp," told reporters the Sabahs had failed to learn the lesson of the Iraqi occupation and were using "old methods."

The Kuwaiti authorities used stun grenades and water cannon to disperse pro-democracy rallies in late 1989 and 1990. They later briefly arrested opposition leaders campaigning for the restoration of parliament, dissolved by the emir in 1986.

The Brotherhood's Khattash, told reporters outside the conference room that the government had let Kuwaitis down.

"We gave them all our support (during the Iraqi invasion) ... unfortunately they did not respect this behaviour," he said.

Political parties are banned in Kuwait, which has a small male only electorate of about 63,000 people.

The emir, promised on April 7

to study giving women the vote and pledged to hold general elections some time next year. The opposition groups demand he fix an earlier date for elections.

Several of the opposition leaders said that obstructing the news conference would work in their favour, giving their cause further weight and more media attention. "It is like they put our statement on a gold plate," said Mr. Nisf. One Western diplomat said it was "not a terribly impressive move by the authorities."

The opposition statement on Sunday warned that the Sabahs were "opening many doors, threatening national unity, blowing the winds of unease, doubts and evil."

Opposition to the ruling family's hold on key economic and security posts has grown since the end of the Iraqi occupation, partly because of delays in restoring public services. Some Kuwaitis also publicly blame them for the Aug. 2 invasion.

Conservative and fundamentalist Sunni Muslim groups have joined hands with Shiite Muslims, pan-Arab nationalists, former deputies, independents, leading merchants and left-of-centre intellectuals to form a united opposition front.

They are not challenging the Sabahs' constitutional right to reign.

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Mancini leads Sampdoria into three-point title lead

ROME (R) — Sampdoria moved another vital point clear of Italian championship rivals Internazionale Sunday.

Captain Roberto Mancini played an inspirational role in Sampdoria's 3-2 win over Bari while Inter were held 0-0 at Fiorentina to drop three points adrift with four games to play.

Inter must now achieve a home triumph against Sampdoria in their table-topping clash on May 5 in order to prevent the Genoa club lifting the crown for the first time.

Mancini's accurate corner enabled defender Pietro Vierchow to break the deadlock in the 41st minute and then he scored himself with a brilliant free-kick on half-time.

Bari refused to submit and roared back in the 64th minute through Giovanni Loseto.

Sampdoria struggled for a period before Gianluca Vialli restored their lead with a 76th minute penalty, though Enrico Cucchi pulled a goal back just three minutes later.

Inter were almost humbled by Fiorentina, Czechoslovak Lubos Kubik and Italian Diego Fuser hitting the woodwork in the last 20 minutes.

Relegation-doomed Bologna achieved a surprise 3-1 away win over fellow strugglers Lecce.

Swiss Kubilay Turkylmaz scored in each half and German Herbert Waas was on target in the 76th minute after Brazilian Mazinho put Lecce ahead with a 33rd minute goal.

Napoli became the first side to defeat Lazio at home this season.

Second half goals from Brazilian Alemão and Giancarlo Zola, replacement for suspended captain Diego Maradona, earned them a 2-0 win.

German striker Karl-Heinz Riedle missed a 36th minute penalty for Lazio.

Brazilian Silas scored for Genoa and Paraguayan Carlos Aguilera replied for Genoa in a 1-1 draw which kept Genoa in contention for a UEFA Cup

place with Juventus, Torino and Parma.

AC Milan drew 1-1 with Roma and Cagliari 0-0 with Juventus Saturday to allow an extra day's preparations for Wednesday's UEFA Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup semifinals.

Kaiserslautern stays top

Kaiserslautern drew 2-2 away to VfB Stuttgart Saturday to maintain their three-point lead in the German soccer first division as the top three teams all drew.

Second-placed Werder Bremen were held to a goalless draw at struggling Bayer Uerdingen, while defending champions Bayern Munich, a further point adrift, drew 2-2 at home to Cologne.

Kaiserslautern went ahead at Stuttgart through Guido Hoffmann in the 25th minute.

Michael Frontzeck equalised for Stuttgart in the 34th minute only to head the ball into his own goal 10 minutes later. Juergen Hartmann levelled again four minutes after the interval and that proved enough to give mid-table Stuttgart a point.

In Munich, Danish international Brian Laudrup headed home in the second minute to give Bayern an early lead.

Maurice Banach equalised for Cologne on the hour but Manfred Schwab appeared to have wrapped up the points for Bayern in the 86th minute when he netted from close range.

Two minutes later, however, Falko Goetz scored with a header to give Cologne a share of the points.

Atletico Madrid's unbeaten run ends

Atletico Madrid's 18-match unbeaten run ended Sunday when they lost 1-0 at home to lowly Real Mallorca, leaving the way clear for Barcelona to cruise to their first Spanish title for five

years.

Barcelona beat Seville 3-0 at home Saturday after visiting goalkeeper Monchi Rodriguez was sent off in the first half for felling striker Aitor Beguiristain.

Barcelona's lead over Atletico widened to seven points with seven matches left. Only a visit to Mallorca and the last game, at Real Madrid, look potentially dangerous.

The last time Atletico lost was at Mallorca five months ago — striker Claudio Barragan scoring the winner in both games. This time his goal came just four minutes from time.

Atletico fought desperately but were missing five players through injuries and suspensions. They also lost German midfielder Bernd Schuster at the end of the first half with a muscle strain.

Real Madrid boosted their UEFA Cup hopes by beating 'humble' Real Betis 3-1 Saturday.

An early goal by Emilio Butragueno and two more from Fernando Hierro wrapped up the match.

Ajax closes gap on PSV

Defending champions Ajax Amsterdam closed the gap on Dutch Soccer League leaders PSV Eindhoven by thrashing bottom club SC Heerenveen 4-0 Sunday.

Third-placed Ajax took the lead in their home match when striker Ron Willems scored in the 14th minute from a pass by defender Danny Blind.

Midfielder Michel Kreek increased the advantage in the 23rd minute and striker Dennis Bergkamp completed the rout with goals in the 70th and 75th minutes.

The victory enabled Ajax, who have a game in hand, to move within three points of PSV.

Both the Eindhoven team and second-placed FC Groningen, who are two points off the top, lost Saturday.

PSV suffered a surprise 1-0



Gianluca Vialli reverse at Sparta Rotterdam, veteran striker Peter Houtman scoring the decisive goal.

Claus Nielsen fired a bat-trick to lead FC Twente Enschede to a 4-2 victory over Groningen.

Benfica recaptures lead

Benfica recaptured leadership of the Portuguese championship Sunday by crushing mid-table Tirsense 5-0 at home.

Champion Porto, who snatched first place Saturday after beating Sporting 2-0 away, returned to second place, one point behind.

The destination of the title could be decided next Sunday when Benfica visit Porto.

An own goal by Paulo Feres just before halftime handed Benfica the lead then Antonio Pacheco scored the second with a 70th minute free-kick. Cesar Brito and Rui Aguiar added two more in the 73rd and 77th minutes and Vitor Paqueta netted the fifth five minutes from time.

Seles wins Houston Slims

HOUSTON, Texas (Agencies) — World number one Monica Seles won her third title of the year by beating second-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez 6-4 6-3 Sunday in the final of the \$350,000 Virginia Slims of Houston tennis tournament.

Seles, winner of the Australian Open and International Players Championship earlier this year, relied on her punishing groundstrokes to sweep the American and claim the \$70,000 top prize in this clay court event.

The 17-year-old Yugoslav, who gained notoriety here two years ago as a 15-year-old by upsetting Chris Evert in the final, raised her 1991 record to 25-2 as she continued to show the form that has lifted her past Steffi Graf in the rankings.

"I'll take each tournament one at a time and be ready to raise my game for the Grand Slams," said Seles, who last year won nine titles including the French Open.

Seles, who has been bothered recently by shin splints, played her usual aggressive baseline style and kept Fernandez off-balance much of the match.

"I was going for my shots and didn't want to get into long rallies with her because she's a good groundstroke," said Seles who has won her last five matches against Fernandez.

Fernandez was credited with hitting 24 winners, but committed 40 unforced errors in the process.

"I played aggressively and kept

gong for it," said Fernandez. "I tried the right things but I missed a few. I played the right style, but I didn't put the ball away."

Fernandez was well aware of her losing record against Seles but was still confident about her game.

"I know I can beat her. I know I'm there," added Fernandez. "It's just a matter of time."

The left-handed Seles raced to a 4-1 advantage in the opening set but Fernandez battled back to level it at 4-all.

Seles held serve for 5-4 and then scored the decisive break in the 10th game, closing out the set by putting away a short lob from Fernandez.

In the second set, Seles again jumped to a 4-1 lead. She held a pair of match points with Fernandez serving in the eighth game, but the American survived both and held to cut the lead to 5-3.

Seles served out the match as Fernandez's cross-court service return sailed wide.

Seles said she was bothered by the sun and the wind.

"The wind picked up and you couldn't go for precise shots," Seles said.

Seles won \$70,000, while Fernandez earned \$31,500.

Despite Seles' hard-hitting, grunting performance, Fernandez was favoured by the crowd of 5,519 at the Westside Tennis Centre. They often cheered her on at crucial moments.

Jaite beats Prpic in Nice

NICE, France (AP) — Martin Jaite of Argentina overcame service problems to beat Goran Prpic of Yugoslavia 3-6, 7-6 (7-1), 6-3, in the final of the \$250,000 Nice Open.

It was Jaite's 12th tournament title, first of the year.

Prpic took a 3-0 lead in the first set as Jaite had trouble with his serve.

"I wanted to make sure to get in some aces on the first serve," Jaite said.

The overzealous Jaite connected on only 37 per cent of his first serves, as Prpic won the set.

But Jaite started getting his shots deeper in the second set, rallying from a 3-1 deficit to serve for the set at 5-3.

"I didn't start serving well until the middle of the match," Jaite said. "He had a chance of winning until then."

However, he wasted two set points. Prpic won the game and eventually forced a debreaker, which Jaite won easily.

With more confidence in his serve, Jaite started rushing to the net more.

The turning point of the match came in the seventh game of the final set when Jaite broke Prpic's serve to go up 4-3.

Jaite almost lost his advantage in the next game as he double faulted, giving Prpic a chance to even it. But Jaite held on to go up 5-3 with Prpic to serve.

Jaite went ahead, but Prpic drew even at 5-5. Then Jaite ended it by taking the next two points, a volley after a good approach shot and backhand passing shot with Prpic caught at the net.

Jaite now enters the \$1-million Monte Carlo Open, where he will meet Richard Fromberg of Australia in the first-round Tuesday.

"Winning a tournament gives you more confidence," Jaite said. "But I have to start to prepare for Monte Carlo tonight. I can't relax."

Sheffield Wednesday humbles mighty Manchester United

LONDON (R) — Second division Sheffield Wednesday upset mighty Manchester United on Sunday by winning the English League Cup soccer final 1-0 at Wembley.

Ireland international midfielder John Sheridan scored in the 57th minute with a 22-metre volley off the upright despite a valiant attempt by United goalkeeper Les Sealey who got a hand

to the ball.

United's Gary Pallister was partly to blame for the goal, trying to clear the ball but heading it straight at Sheridan's feet for the Nottingham Forest reject to fire home.

It was Wednesday's first major trophy for 56 years and made them only the fifth second division team to win the cup.

'Mistake' turns out just fine for Souness

LONDON (R) — When Glasgow Rangers Chairman David Murray heard manager Graeme Souness was packing his bags for Liverpool last week, he said simply: "He's made the biggest mistake of his life."

So far, as mistakes go, it has gone very well.

Souness arrived at Liverpool Tuesday, saw league leaders Arsenal squander a 2-0 lead against Manchester City Wednesday and heard Friday that his second-placed club were finally to be let back into European competition.

Then Saturday, in his first match in charge, the defending champions scored a comprehensive 3-0 win over Norwich that left them within three points of the leaders.

"I told them I must have effort and I got that today," a smiling Souness said after the game. "If I have it for the rest of my time here, I will be a happy man."

Predicting the demise of the Anfield machine has long been a favourite pastime of British sports commentators. They are still the flagship of English soccer, goes the refrain, but can't you see the cracks?

Souness, it appears, cannot. In an upbeat news conference Friday, the former Scotland and Liverpool skipper was confident they were still the best team around.

"I have the most gifted players

in British football. All that has gone wrong is that they have been feeling sorry for themselves."

Ironically, it is Souness's close friend Kenny Dalglish who must take some of the blame for that. His shock resignation two months ago after six years as Liverpool manager turned a rough patch at the club into a crisis.

Two days after his resignation, Liverpool squandered a three-point league lead over Arsenal with a 3-1 defeat away to Luton. The next week saw them knocked out of the F.A. Cup by Merseyside rivals Everton. The week after that Arsenal went to Anfield and beat the champions 1-0.

Under caretaker manager Ronnie Moran Liverpool began to pull themselves together, but even Moran had to admit that a firmer hand was needed on the tiller.

"I think his is ideal for the job," Moran said on Souness's arrival. "He will be just as successful for Liverpool as Kenny."

That is a lot to ask. Deprived of European competition following the Heysel Stadium disaster in 1985, Dalglish led Liverpool to three league titles and two F.A. Cups, including the league and Cup double in his very first year.

Dalglish's own thoughts on his successor have not yet been recorded, but they would be sure to make interesting reading.

The two men, both Scottish

internationals, played together at Liverpool from 1977 to 1984. During that time they formed an almost telepathic understanding on the pitch.

Souness, the "hard man" of the Liverpool midfield, even became Dalglish's self-appointed bodyguard, quick to react if an opponent picked on the shy and introverted "little Kenny."

In one sense, Souness is still picking up the pieces after his friend, but at least he will have an added incentive for success — the knowledge that Liverpool need only three points in their last four games to secure a place in European competition next season.

One man who has all but lost that incentive is Crystal Palace manager Steve Coppell, whose team seem firmly ensconced in third place.

Coppell Saturday launched an

attack on the English Football (F.A.) for their failure to persuade the European Football Union (UEFA) to give England another UEFA Cup place.

"After we had the carrot dangled all season for a place in Europe, to have it removed is a kick in the teeth," he said.

"To play in Europe would have been something special in the history of this club. This country had its best World Cup for 20 years and yet we go cap in hand and begging for places."

"Yet East Germany, a non-existent country, has four clubs and after next season the United Germany could have as many as nine or 10 teams."

"It shows the manipulation of the system and our F.A. are like dummies on a wall.... Europe needs English clubs more than we need them."

Peanuts



Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY APRIL 23, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Lighter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You can get everything of a basis nature well arranged now that you have taken the time to rid yourself of items standing in the way of your progress. You won't miss them.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Go straight in that prominent person who can help you to make your career dreams come true and state to him exactly what you have in mind.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) So many new ideas are yours now that can bring you some formerly distant and unobtainable benefit can be secured now by being more openminded.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A time to find out exactly what others expect of you in the way of performance in getting duties done in a very meticulous manner.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is the time for you to be sure to let those about you see you are the one who does listen to what partners have to say and make joint arrangements.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have a great deal of work to do and this is your day in pitch in and to do it without delay and with the help with usual fellow associates.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There are a number of pleasures now available to you so take some time off or use every spare

moment to get out and have a good time today.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Now you are able to take a good look about your home and to make any changes that you have been considering and that can last for some time.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think out ways you and your usual allies can get along better in your everyday dealings and then put such plan in operation immediately.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is your day to make sure you keep your attention focused upon that given stuff that makes the world go around so be practical.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Whatever you most want to do of a personal nature is just right for you now so make a point to get out socially and enjoy yourself.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is the moment for you to get off alone and to think out and to decide just how you would like your life to be in the future and get help.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A time to make sure you get together with friends of long standing or those who know what they are talking about and get them to help you get your personal desires.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"This year I want to spend more for your sister's Christmas present. What flavor gum does she like?"

JUMBLE

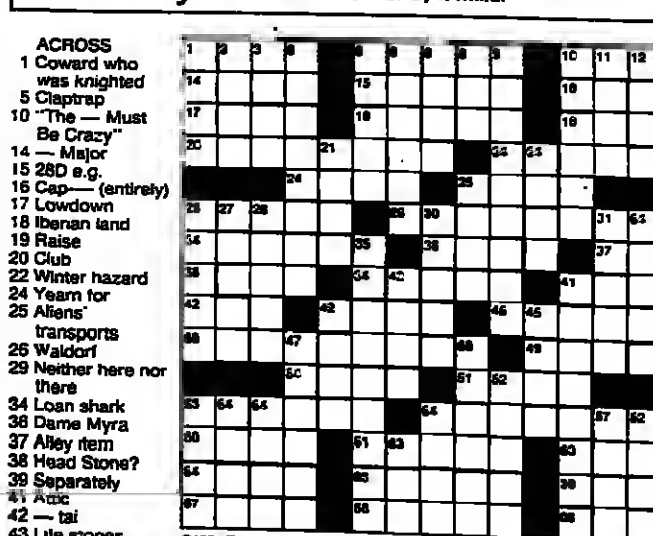
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: _____ (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: COLON NEWLY TYCOON VARIED
Answer: What some people seem to take when they go shopping—INVENTORY

THE Daily Crossword by I. Miller



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
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RENDER UNTO CAESAR

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ 8 4
♥ Q 7 2
♦ A K 9 2
♣ A K 4 1

EAST
♠ A 10 9 3
♥ A 10 8 3
♦ Q 5
♣ 10 9 2

SOUTH
♠ K Q J 7 6 2
♥ 9 6 5
♦ J 7
♣ Q 8

The bidding:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 4 ♠ Pass

Opening lead: Four of

One of the advantages of Jacoby Transfer Bids is that it enables the stronger hand of the partnership to declare, with the accompanying advantage that the lead comes up to the strong hand not through it. Sometimes, however, the cards can prove perverse, as this hand from a pair tournament proves.

Where North-South were using the convention, North became declarer at four spades. Looking at two almost sure trump tricks, East

usually led the ace of hearts, and the defenders took two heart tricks and two trumps for down one. At other tables the auction followed more traditional paths, as above, and South declared. An immediate heart attack here would have resulted in down two, but who would lead a heart from that holding?

The usual opening lead was a diamond, and South had received a reprieve. One intrepid declarer ran that to his jack—unlucky; down two. The natural line was to win in dummy and play three rounds of clubs, discarding a heart from hand.

Some declarers now led a spade to the jack and, when that held, returned to dummy with a high diamond for a second trump lead.

The queen won, but when West showed out, declarer could not avoid losing two tricks in each major for down one.

The winning line is to play off four rounds of clubs, discarding a second heart from hand whether or not East ruffs. That way the defenders can score no more than one heart trick and two trumps. This fails only if one of the defenders holds specifically one trump and three clubs, but then the contract would have been doomed anyway.

'West won't aid Soviets without reforms'

Inflation-wary IMF opposes U.S. plan for lower world interest rates

WASHINGTON (R) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is set to side with Germany against the United States and oppose Washington's drive for lower world interest rates to spur global economic growth.

A senior IMF official warned of the dangers of forcing interest rates lower, saying the battle against inflation is far from over. "We need to avoid any kind of complacency about inflation," said the official, who declined to be identified.

The United States is expected to take its campaign for lower interest rates to the semi-annual meeting of the IMF and World Bank that starts in Washington this week.

The United States wants economic policymakers to shift their focus from fighting inflation to promoting growth. It argues that faster growth is needed to prevent growing demands for capital in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Latin America from triggering a global credit crunch.

But Germany, worried that soaring costs for unification and excessive wage demands could spur domestic inflation, has so far shown scant signs of acceding to the U.S. demands.

The senior IMF official said inflation remains at "worrying levels" in the United States and that the best way for governments to get interest rates lower was to follow sound budgetary policies.

However, he told reporters that the IMF plans to canvass its member governments this week about the possibility of an allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR), the fund's artificial currency.

An SDR allocation by the fund would add to countries' currency

reserves and give them extra borrowing and spending power at a time of scarce capital resources.

The fund is mandated by its founding charter to take periodic soundings of its members about an SDR allocation. But concern about the threatened global credit crunch could mean that the idea will elicit more sympathy now than in the past.

Japan, which in the past has opposed any such move as inflationary, is now looking at various ways that global liquidity can be increased, including an SDR allocation, Japanese officials said.

Tokyo's interest in such schemes may have been aroused by fears that it is only a matter of time before the United States looks to Japan to spur global growth and add to world liquidity by lowering its interest rates.

The IMF official saw few problems in deciding how many SDRs could be released without stoking up inflation.

But the question of how the money should be distributed and who should get it would be more difficult to resolve, he said.

Rather than a blanket allocation to all of the IMF's more than 150 member governments, some countries have advocated distributing the money to those most in need.

But to ensure that developing countries don't squander the capital, the IMF might have to tie its distribution to the carrying out of tough economic reforms.

The threat of a global credit squeeze and how best to loosen it is expected to be high on the agenda when economic policymakers from the powerful Group of Seven get together next Sunday during the IMF-World Bank

annual meeting.

The IMF official said rifts between various members of the Group of Seven — Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States — were likely and in fact inevitable, given their growing economic interdependence.

Said the official: "The more intimate your relations, the more frictions you have."

The IMF official said Sunday that the West will not give aid to the Soviet Union until it reforms the "rotten structure" of its economy.

He urged Moscow to settle its power-sharing disputes with its republics and speed up economic reforms if it wants to win support from the international community to rescue its battered economy.

"No country in the world at the present time is ready to put money in a rotten structure," said the official.

"Reform is a must and for reform to be implemented a political agreement on a union treaty ... (has) to be settled."

Poland issues million zloty note

WARSAW (R) — Poland, still battling with high inflation, issued a one million zloty (\$105.30) banknote Monday — its first ever seven-digit currency unit.

The government expects inflation to fall to about 50 per cent this year after hitting 250 per cent in 1990, when a 500,000 zloty (\$52.63) note was introduced.

The new bill will make things easier for cashiers but for many Poles will remain only a symbol of affluence. The average monthly salary is just 1.5 million zloties (\$160).

The blue and beige note depicts per-war Polish writer Wladyslaw Reymont who won the Nobel prize for literature in 1924.

On Sunday, Poland signed a landmark 50 per cent debt reduction agreement with the Paris Club of Western government creditors.

"An agreement with the Paris Club was signed today following 40 hours of often dramatic negotiations," the state television said.

Under the agreement, the 17 Western creditor-governments pledged to reduce Poland's official debt of \$35 billion by 30 per cent over the next three years and by a further 20 per cent if the Polish government adhered to an economic programme presented to the International Monetary Fund.

"If all the countries were to reduce the debt by only the 50 per cent minimum agreed, it would drop to \$19 billion within three years," the television said.

Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz, the chief architect of Poland's capitalist-style economic reforms, called the deal "a major breakthrough" which would restore Poland's credibility as an economic partner.

Gulf stock markets consider moves to lure private capital

DUBAI (R) — Private investors deserted the Gulf's fledgling stock markets after Iraq invaded Kuwait but dealers say the need to lure them back is spurring governments to action that will benefit the markets in the long term.

Continued fears for the region's political future, coupled with the need to meet the huge cost of the Gulf war, should encourage moves to attract private capital, they said.

The Iraqi occupation destroyed Kuwait's relatively advanced financial markets, so that Bahrain now has the most financially liberal stock exchange in the Gulf.

In seeking to widen its investor base and boost liquidity, Bahrain is tackling the main problems facing the Gulf's equity trading sector as a whole.

If it gets government clearance for its plans, the Bahrain exchange may let in foreign investors, encourage smaller players

and create a market index, brokers said.

Bahrain at present allows investment from the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Letting in foreign investors could crack the problem of low turnover and volume, which create unwanted volatility.

Many private investors transferred money overseas for fear of Iraq. Some has returned but plenty of that money has not come back to GCC countries," said a Bahraini brokerage manager.

The exchange also envisages having market makers in stocks, who encourage turnover as wholesalers between buyers and sellers, and eventually licensing international brokers.

Officials admit there are problems in applying these new ideas, particularly on the regulatory side.

But brokers say it is the path of

the future if Gulf markets are not to fall into a terminal sleep.

"One day I might do 5,000 dinars business, the next 10,000, sometimes 500,000 in a day. Turnover is not stable and there is no reliable average," said one broker.

Brokers said the exchange also plans ordering listed companies to make a 10 for one share split.

Most Bahrain firms' shares have a par value of one dinar (\$2.65). Cutting the price of a single share is a common method of attracting less wealthy investors.

Even before the Gulf crisis, GCC governments were expanding, establishing, or considering stock markets to attract private capital to replace oil revenues which have fallen since the boom years of the 1970s.

After Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion, Bahrain shares slumped about 20 per cent, in line with markets throughout the region. Some

shares in the worst-hit banking sector lost half their value.

The market has rallied since the Gulf war ended in February and most shares are back to pre-invasion levels.

Brokers said many investors have shifted from long-term buying to a shorter-term strategy, looking for quick trading profits in the post-war market recovery.

They expect a continued upturn in prices in the end of the year but are reluctant to forecast further ahead.

A coincidental reversal in the yield gap between Bahraini dinar deposits and equities has also helped stimulate interest in higher yield stocks, brokers said.

An investor who can guarantee a 9.9 per cent return on dividend by holding shares is going to prefer that to a six per cent return on banked money.

But these factors look temporary and brokers agree the investor base needs widening to guarantee a healthier future.

Soviet PM unveils latest anti-crisis economic programme

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov Monday unveiled an anti-crisis programme widely regarded as the last chance to rescue the fast-disintegrating economy.

"The situation in our country can only be described as a sweeping crisis," Pavlov told a sombre session of the Supreme Soviet, the nation's parliament.

Pavlov later hinted that interior ministry troops could be used to isolate leaders of strikes currently spreading throughout the country and strangling the economy.

The crisis programme calls for privatisation of two-thirds of small enterprises by the end of the year, the freeing of prices by October 1992 and a ban on politically motivated strikes.

President Mikhail Gorbachev, under increasing fire from both radicals and hardline communists for failing to stem the crisis, looked on impassively as Pavlov told parliament that disaster loomed unless the programme was implemented.

Gorbachev, just back from a largely unsuccessful trip to Japan and South Korea, will face calls for his resignation as Communist Party chief at a key party meeting Wednesday.

"There are a lot of positive things in this programme. It is realistic and concrete," he told the newly-formed Russian Information Agency.

The ban on political strikes is the key element of Pavlov's plan, which has to be approved by parliament.

"Democracy without discipline does not exist anywhere — the only result is chaos," Pavlov said to applause from the 420 deputies present.

"We do not want to stifle democracy ... (but) we must work, we must understand that the country is in danger," he stressed.

Miners demanding huge pay increases and Gorbachev's resignation showed no sign of easing a seven-week-old strike which has paralysed coal fields and the steel



Valentin Pavlov

industry.

Pavlov, who believes many are being forced to stay away from work, told a news conference he favoured introducing a "special regime" in some regions.

"A state of emergency or special regime does not mean that people will be forced back to work but it is possible to let people work with the help of force. For that we do not need the army," he said.

He gave no further details but his comments seemed to suggest that interior ministry troops might be used to break blockades and detain strike leaders.

Gulf Air anticipates \$114m loss this year

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — The chairman of Gulf Air, hit hard by the crisis caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, said the carrier lost 36 million dinars (\$95 million) in 1990 and faced tough times for the next three years.

The chairman, Yousef Shirawi, said in remarks published Sunday the airline was expected to lose a further 43 million dinars (\$114 million) in 1991.

Gulf Air, owned by Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the government of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, had a net profit of 27.7 million dinars (\$75 million) in 1989.

Shirawi told the newspaper Al Khaleej the company was reducing its 5,000-strong staff and cutting wages as part of a recovery plan.

Shirawi, who is also Bahrain's development and industry minister, said 70 per cent of the staff were foreign nationals.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Monday, April 22, 1991 Central Bank official rates			
Buy	Sell	Japanese yen (for 100)	491.3 494.2
682.4 684.0	Dutch guilder	5	942.3 949.4
1169.6 1176.6	Swedish crown	100	109.7 110.4
291.4 293.7	Italian lira (for 100)	53.0	33.3
463.4 466.2	Belgian franc (for 10)	125.5	193.7
116.0 116.7			

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

TOKYO — Stocks closed lower in extremely thin trading. Among factors pushing prices down were Wall Street's weak finish Friday, a low yen and dampened hopes for interest rate cuts. The Nikkei average ended down 304.96 or 1.15 per cent, to 26,237.01 with 250 million shares changing hands.

SYDNEY — Stocks ended a seven-session winning streak to close lower as weakness in offshore markets sapped confidence. The All Ordinaries ended down 7.5 points at 1,512.9.

HONG KONG — The Hang Seng Index slid 84.91 points, or 2.32 per cent, to 3,582.49. But light afternoon bargain-hunting boosted the index some 45 points from its intraday low.

SINGAPORE — Shares closed mixed in quiet trade with a weak undertone from Wall Street's Friday fall and a sharp drop in the Tokyo market Monday. The Straits Times Index closed at 1,532.08, up 1.99 points.

BOMBAY — Shares ended selectively higher in hectic trade. The Bombay Stock Exchange Index rose 3.33 points to 1,287.27. The National Index firmed 4.74 to 645.32.

FRANKFURT — German shares tumbled 1.7 per cent on a heavy loss for Chancellor Helmut Kohl's ruling Christian Democrats in regional polls and the dollar's surge against the mark. The Dax Index ended 27.46 points lower at 1,571.91.

PARIS — Shares slipped quietly to five-week lows as sellers took profits at the end of the account and buyers remained sidelined by concerns over the course of the economy and interest rates. The CAC-40 Index ended down 23.92 points at 1,767.20.

LONDON — Shares closed at their day's lows following sharp opening falls on Wall Street. The FTSE index fell 29.3 points to 2,490.8.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One Sterling	1.7125/35	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1571/76	Canadian dollar	
	1.7465/75	Deutschemark	
	1.9670/80	Dutch guilder	
	1.4682/89	Swiss franc	
	35.85/89	Belgian franc	
	5.8850/00	French franc	
	1288/1289	Italian lire	
	138.50/60	Japanese yen	
	6.2250/2300	Swedish crown	
	6.7820/70	Norwegian crowns	
	6.6700/50	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	356.20/356.70	U.S. dollars	

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Show: 6:30

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CONCORD

★ PRETTY WOMAN

Show: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

Madonna & Warren Betty

★ DICK TRACY

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 675571

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Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

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German state election defeat is 'catastrophe' for Kohl's party

BONN (R) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU) suffered a catastrophe in losing his home state to the opposition and must review their strategy for cementing German unity, leading CDU politicians said Monday.

Kohl's one-time fiefdom of Rhineland-Palatinate turned to the opposition Social Democrats (SPD) in state polls Sunday, giving its native son a slap in the face for reneging on his promise last year not to raise taxes to finance unification.

The SPD win also tipped the balance of power in Bonn, where the opposition can now block key legislation with a majority of the 16 states represented in the upper house of parliament, the Bundesrat.

SPD winner Rudolf Scharping, 43, met his advisers in the state capital Mainz Monday to consider whether to ask the Free Democrats — Kohl's partners in his Bonn government — or the environmentalist Greens to join his coalition.

"This result is a catastrophe for the CDU in Rhineland-Palatinate

and for the national party," Heiner Geissler, a leading CDU parliamentarian, told German radio.

"The alarm bells are ringing. We can't go back to business as usual. We were the ones who achieved unity and now Germany is turning red (Social Democratic),"

Bernhard Vogel, like Kohl a former CDU premier in the wine-growing state bordering France, said the party must search for "the new start that's needed after a debacle like this."

The SPD swept 44.8 per cent of the state assembly vote, up six per cent from the 1987 figure, while the CDU plunged to 38.7 per cent from 45.1 per cent in the last poll.

Its unexpectedly large triumph, which depressed the mark and share prices in Frankfurt Monday morning, gave the SPD power to back federal legislation on taxes and other issues.

More than half of all federal laws must be approved by the Bundesrat, including legislation concerning spending.

SPD national Chairman-Designate Bjoern Engholm said

his party would use its new powers to torpedo the remainder of Kohl's late-1980s tax reforms, the final step of which is to reduce property taxes this year to boost investment.

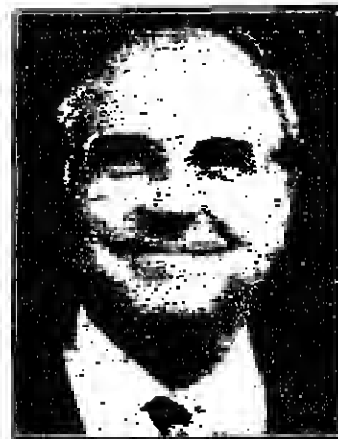
Kohl has gone from setback to setback after steering the two Germanys to unity last October and winning reelection in the first all-German polls in December.

With unemployment and discontent rising in the ex-Communist east, confidence in the free-market revolution Kohl predicted has faded and Bonn has had to take on a larger role in the vast and costly task of restructuring the crumbling economy.

While the chancellor himself was not threatened, the loss of yet another state to the opposition was a serious warning to him and his party, the conservative daily Die Welt commented.

"The CDU is drying out from the bottom up and losing its basis in the states," Die Welt, an active Kohl supporter, said.

"All the big states in the west are ruled by the SPD or coalitions of the SPD and the Greens. In fact, the CDU now has its base



Helmut Kohl only in the east, and even there things are shaky."

"We won because we were credible," said Scharping, who during his campaign repeatedly accused Kohl of lying when he had pledged to avoid tax hikes to finance German unification.

The liberal Free Democrats (FDP), junior partner in the outgoing state government coalition, won 6.9 per cent of votes, down 0.4 per cent, while the Greens got 6.4 per cent, a slight increase.

Burma general rules out power transfer

BANGKOK (R) — A leading member of Burma's military junta, in one of the clearest statements in months about the army's plans, has said there is no chance of a handover of power to civilians in the foreseeable future.

Official Burmese media, monitored here Monday, quoted deputy army chief General Than Shwe as saying most political parties were subversive and unfit to rule.

"The reason we have not transferred the responsibilities of the country to others is because it is not yet feasible to hand them over. At present we cannot find any organisation that can govern the country in a peaceful and stable manner," he said.

The army, Burma's tough ruler since crushing pro-democracy unrest nearly three years ago, has offered a vague promise to step down but has jalled most prominent opposition figures.

Diplomats in Rangoon and Bangkok said Than Shwe's statement, although saying nothing new, scotched any hopes that the army was about to make concessions before the anniversary of elections held last May.

The statement also made clear, they said, that the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) was adopting a tough public stance despite vocal criticism of its human-rights record by the United Nations and Western governments.

"The fact that they still say all this in the open is amazing," said one diplomat based in Bangkok.

All but three senior members of the National League for Democracy (NLD), landslide winners of last May's elections, are under arrest, in hiding or have been forced into early retirement. Founding leader Aung San Suu Kyi is in her 21st month of house arrest.

Diplomats said the NLD itself had been neutralised by months of harassment. The party has been barred from making public statements and most of its branch offices are shut.

Residents travelling the countryside during last week's Buddhist New Year festival said most people still spoke fondly of Aung San Suu Kyi but regarded the NLD as a shell.

"It may not be entirely true but it is the popular view," said one. "That is significant for a nation which gave the NLD 80 per cent of the seats (in last year's poll)."

Diplomats said the SLORC had in recent weeks tightened its grip by forcing politicians to fill in lengthy questionnaires about their beliefs. Civil servants were sent shorter questionnaires and similarly grilled on their answers.

No official reason for the interrogations has been given. Diplomats said it might be linked to military plans to hold a national convention as the first step in a heavily supervised process of drawing up a new constitution.

"A country does not come as cheaply as vegetables. This being the case, power cannot be transferred without a strong and stable constitution," Than Shwe said in his speech, broadcast on state television.

No date has been set for the convention. Parties including the NLD that called for an immediate transfer of power after the election have been forced to agree to the army's plan for a slow power handover.

Indian leader holds secret talks with Sikhs

NEW DELHI (R) — Caretaker Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar has opened secret talks with Sikh militants in a dramatic twist to a bitter debate among political parties over the inclusion of Punjab in India's general elections next month.

A government spokesman said Shekhar met delegations from three militant groups last Wednesday and Friday and that they agreed to consider his plea to give up violence and take part in the elections, scheduled for May 20, 23 and 26.

Shekhar, on the campaign trail, told reporters the talks were secret and that their outcome could not be made public now.

The spokesman refused to identify the participants in what appeared to be one of the few significant contacts between the two sides during the decade-old Sikh separatist campaign. Thousands have been killed, 1,600 of them this year alone.

Shekhar's attempts to open talks with the militants have received little or no support from other major parties, including Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party which kept Shekhar's minority government in power from November until last month.

Gandhi has also opposed Shekhar's bid to conduct parliamentary or state assembly polls in Punjab and Assam, another state hit by separatist violence.

Shekhar's decision to go ahead with the talks is expected to further harden opposition from Congress and the rightwing Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to voting in Punjab.

The talks led Punjab Governor O.P. Malhotra to announce a series of concessions to the militants last Saturday.

They included a government

pledge to free several hundred young Sikhs held in jails on charges of involvement in the campaign to carve out a Sikh nation called Khalistan, or land of the pure.

Some 11,000 Sikh youths are in jail, many held for up to eight years without trial.

The government also agreed to compile a list of people who were killed when the army went into Amritsar's Golden Temple, the holiest Sikh shrine, in 1984 to flush out militants using it as a headquarters. At least 1,000 people died.

Malhotra announced the concessions a day before he himself met the three separatist groups in the state capital of Chandigarh.

The groups assured the government they would take part in further talks, the government spokesman in New Delhi said.

But two of the biggest militant groups issued statements denying they were involved in the talks, saying Shekhar was not in a position to discuss their main demand — Khalistan.

Gandhi, bidding to return to power but unlikely to reap votes in either Punjab or Assam, has led opposition to polls in the two states, saying the militants would coerce voters.

Shekhar has adopted a more conciliatory approach. He was almost alone among Indian politicians who opposed the 1984 decision by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Gandhi's mother, to send troops into the Golden Temple.

Indira Gandhi's Sikh bodyguards assassinated her four months later.

Rajiv Gandhi, who succeeded her, imposed direct rule on Punjab in May 1987.

Women score record win in Japanese regional elections

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese voters elected the nation's first woman mayor and a record number of women to city assembly seats, according to nationwide local election results announced Monday.

Hitoshi Motoshima, who last year suffered a near-fatal pistol attack from an ultra-rightist after claiming the late Emperor Hirohito bore some responsibility for World War II, won his fourth term as mayor of Nagasaki in Sunday's elections.

A beaming Harue Kitamura, 62, was shown in morning newspapers celebrating her win as Japan's first female mayor, lifted high by her male supporters in Ashiya City, western Japan.

Mrs. Kitamura, a lawyer who ran as an independent candidate, defeated the incumbent backed by the governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) after campaigning for better education.

"More women should become involved in city politics," she told the mass-circulation daily Asahi Shimbun. "They should also advance to management positions if they have the ability."

"Mother power wins" and "aproned supporters cheer" were among the national headlines announcing her victory.

"The birth of (a woman mayor) should have come sooner, Asahi quoted Teiko Kihira, a woman member of parliament, as saying. "She will undoubtedly serve as a great lighthouse for women aiming for participation in political decision-making."

Women won at least 572 seats in city assemblies, a record high, with about 95 per cent of the seats accounted for by 12 p.m. (0300 GMT), according to Kyodo News Service. The previous high was 504 seats in 1987.

Cambodia premier in Tokyo for medical treatment

TOKYO (AP) — Cambodian Premier Hun Sen, in Tokyo for medical treatment, discussed Cambodian peace problems Monday with a Japanese Foreign Minister official, the ministry said.

A ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, declined to disclose details of Hun Sen's talks at a Tokyo hotel with Sakutaro Tamino, the ministry's director general for Asian affairs.

Earlier, another ministry official said Japanese government officials had no plans to meet

Hun Sen, who is visiting Japan for the first time since Tokyo was host to Cambodian peace talks last June.

The second official said that if doctors permit, Deputy Foreign Minister Hisashi Owada may meet Hun Sen.

The first official said the Japanese government has accepted the 40-year-old Hun Sen's visit to Japan from "a humanitarian point of view," but declined to discuss details of his illness or to identify the hospital that is treating him.

When the dissolution was formally signed on Feb. 25 in Budapest, some documents were not made public. Sources who asked not to be identified said they contained only a few of the secret accords that once made the pact a formidable military machine.

The revelation in Hungary suggests, however, that secrets will now begin to emerge through the newly democratic media and governments of East European states.

Last week, Czechoslovak Defence Minister Lubos Dobrovsky admitted under questioning in the federal parliament that nuclear weapons may have been stored at Soviet bases in Czechoslovakia.

Neither he nor other defence officials questioned on the subject made clear whether these were additional to the nuclear missiles the Soviet admitted stationing in Czechoslovakia to counter what Moscow said was the threat from Western Pershing 2 and Cruise missiles.

N. Korea calls Gorbachev-Roh summit in S. Korea 'criminal'

TOKYO (AP) — North Korean media Monday issued denunciations of the Soviet and South Korean presidents' summit talks as a "criminal dealing" harmful to Korean unification.

Pyeongyang's Korean Central News Agency carried a statement condemning the talks and attributed it to the South Korean National Democratic Front, a group Seoul officials say is a front for North Korean propaganda. The agency report was monitored in Tokyo.

The statement said Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was lured by money to last week's talks with South Korean President Roh Tae-woo.

South Korea has offered major economic cooperation to the Soviets, who long have been a

major ally and arms supplier of the Communist North.

In addition, Soviet officials recently said that if North Korea refuses to sign a nuclear safeguard agreement, it will suspend supplies of nuclear fuel, technology and other help to the North.

The statement carried Monday said "South Korean revolutionaries" would react with "indignation and derision at the wretched sight of those who, fascinated by dollars, sell off politics, ideology and obligation."

It said the talks were "a criminal dealing that brought into sharp focus once again the funkyst and anti-national scheme of the Roh-Tae Woo group to freeze the division of the territory."

Meanwhile Roh may visit the United States in early July for talks with President George Bush

in an effort to bolster South Korea's bid for U.N. membership, a newspaper reported Monday.

The Chosun Ilbo quoted high-ranking government sources as saying Roh will brief Bush on his talks last Saturday with Gorbachev.

Roh also seeks Bush's help in persuading China to endorse South Korea's effort to gain a seat in the United Nations, the newspaper said. The agenda for the talks also will include nuclear facilities in the South's rival, communist North Korea, it said.

The newspaper said Roh may visit Canada following his talks with Bush.

South Korea recently has stepped up diplomatic efforts to win international support for its bid for U.N. membership.

Mandela: Security forces involved in violence

KYOTO, Japan (R) — South Africa's black opposition leader Nelson Mandela accused security forces Monday of conniving in violence plaguing black townships and urged foreign governments to consult blacks before lifting sanctions.

Mandela was speaking to an international conference of journalists in Kyoto hours before South African President F.W. de Klerk began a tour of Britain, Denmark and Ireland to argue that apartheid was being dismantled and remaining sanctions should be lifted.

Mandela, deputy president of the African National Congress (ANC), follows De Klerk to London Wednesday to counter his message.

Mandela said disputes between rival black groups were no longer the major cause of township violence, which killed 600 people in the first three months of this year. He suggested there was a deliberate campaign to foment unrest in which security forces were involved.

"What we are witnessing is an attempt to bludgeon African communities into submission ... the aim of the orchestrators of this killing is to instil a psychosis of mistrust and insecurity among the people," he said.

"Faction fighting among rival political groups cannot explain away the blatant connivance of sizeable sections of the government's security organs."

"Nor can such disputes explain the outright refusal of the government to check the activities of its police, who still employ ruthless violence to suppress the political activities of the black population."

Mandela said the persistent violence made the opposition less convinced than many international leaders that the South African government's dismantling of apartheid was irreversible.

He criticised foreign governments and businesses for rushing to lift sanctions on South Africa.

Mulroney reshuffles cabinet

OTTAWA (R) — In a major cabinet reshuffle, Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney appointed a woman as foreign minister in place of the veteran Joe Clark, who gets the job of trying to prevent the separation of Quebec.

Announcing his overhaul Sunday, Mulroney said national unity was the key goal of his Conservative government, whose popularity is at its lowest ebb since he came to power in 1984. Latest opinion polls show it has the support of only 16 per cent of the electorate.

"The constitutional issue is the most important one," Mulroney told reporters.

"We're preparing for reconciliation and nation-building. I have full confidence in our capacity to persevere, to prevail and to succeed in the question of national unity."

Mulroney created a cabinet "unity" committee with Clark, a former prime minister and external affairs minister for seven years, named to referee constitutional squabbling over the future of French-speaking Quebec.

As minister for constitutional proposals to the provinces which last summer scuttled an accord that would have made Quebec a willing partner within Canada.

Canada's new representative on the world stage as external affairs minister is tough-talking Barbara McDougall, who has previously had cabinet-level responsibility for immigration and women's issues.

Finance Minister Michael Wilson, creator last January of a hugely unpopular value-added tax, takes over a new "super ministry" designed to boost Canada's competitiveness abroad.

He is replaced in the finance job by Donald Mazankowski, who keeps his position as deputy prime minister but sheds responsibility for agriculture, taken over by Bill McKnight.

Wilson leaves Mazankowski a recession, a swollen accumulated budget debt and a legacy of bitter value-added tax.

Mazankowski said he would "stay the course" on Wilson's policies. "When you've got sound policies, you don't have to be different," he said.

U.K. carries out national census amid controversy

LONDON (R) — Millions of Britons put aside innate reticence to fill out forms for a national census designed to help policy-makers and planners shape Britain's future into the 21st century.

The job of profiling Britain, which involves 135,000 data collectors and 23 million questionnaires, comes once every 10 years, so the 1991 census will be the last this century.

But the census invariably stirs controversy as this island nation known for its reserve, even secretiveness, chafes at the idea of having to tell the government all about itself.

"We have experienced a lot of suspicion of government in taking round the forms," Stephen Park, a spokesman for the census office, told the Sunday Telegraph newspaper.

"There have been some unpleasant moments."

The Census Office went so far

as to get advice from other government officials experienced in door-to-door confrontations.

"The Post Office advised us on tactics ... saying that if there is a fierce dog on the horizon threatening to attack, make a noise like a wild cat and it should go away," Park said.

The 1991 questionnaire, which must be filled in for collection later this week, has drawn fire from religious groups, gay rights activists, academics and feminists as being either too intrusive or too vague in its questions.

Others fear the information will be cross-checked with tax records or passed on to businesses that could use it for profit.

The form asks for names of all people living in a household, details on profession, marital status, and for the first time since the census began in 1801, ethnic background.

Historic political reform package passed in Taiwan

TAIPEI (R) — The old men of Taiwan's National Assembly voted themselves out of a job Monday by passing historic constitutional reforms designed to bring more democracy to the island.

After approving the reform package, the assembly voted to declare an end to emergency wartime provisions the nationalist party has used to govern Taiwan since it fled Communist victory in China in 1949.

"This will have a decisive impact on the future of the country," assembly member Lin Shih-Hui told reporters, adding the reforms would pave the way for true multi-party democracy.

Opposition deputies, who have screamed and brawled in the chamber to protest against the package, were quiet Monday. The eight members from the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) have boycotted the assembly since April 15.

Smooth passage of the constitutional reforms clears the way for President Lee Teng-Hui's plan to establish greater democracy in Taiwan while maintaining his government's claim to be the rightful ruler of all China.

He has promised to officially promulgate the reforms by May. Under the plan, Taiwan-elected deputies will form the majority in the National Assembly.

bly, the legislature and the watchdog control Yuan, all now packed with elderly Nationalist Party member elected four decades ago in mainland China.

The "mainland deputies," many now in their 70s and 80s, are required by a new law to retire by the end of this year.

Elections for the new National Assembly are tentatively scheduled for December, with elections for the other two bodies following next year.

Taipei's claim to China will be symbolically preserved by a number of "National" seats distributed between the Nationalists and other political parties according to the results of the elections.

The DPP has fought Lee's reform plan, which it says does not go far enough and will simply maintain the Nationalist grip on power.

Though the assembly Monday threw out "Temporary provisions" in force since 1948, key elements such as wide emergency powers for the president have been built in to the new constitutional revisions.

The DPP, many of whose members believe Taiwan should drop all claims to China and set up as an independent state, last week led about 10,000 people on an all-night protest march to show its anger.

Queen Elizabeth turns 65

LONDON (R) — Britain's media have renewed the debate on whether Queen Elizabeth, who turned 65 Sunday, should abdicate in favour of her 42-year-old heir, Prince Charles. The Sunday Telegraph newspaper concluded that the queen, who came to the throne aged 25, will honour the coronation oath binding her to the service of the British people until death. "As far as she is concerned, there will be no choice in the matter, whatever the speculation," it said. Sky Television carried out a straw poll in which most of those surveyed said they did not want the queen to retire. The Daily Mirror tackled the issue Saturday in a report headlined: "Is it time for her to hang up her crown?" and invited readers to take part in a telephone poll on whether she should retire. The Daily Express asked a similar question earlier in the week. "With Prince Charles waiting in the wings, is it time for her to step down and enjoy a happy and glorious retirement?" it asked. "If such a tactless, cranky, bad-tempered figure were to ascend the throne at this juncture — to say nothing of his rocky relations with his wife — it would only be a matter of time before we all decided that it was time to declare a republic," novelist A.N. Wilson wrote in the Spectator magazine.

Former Australian minister jailed for fiddling expenses

BRISBANE (R) — A former prisons minister in the Australian state of Queensland found himself on the other side of the bars when he was jailed for a year for fiddling expenses. Geoff Muntz was the fourth member of the now disgraced government of former Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen to be jailed. Muntz was found guilty of 19 counts of misusing nearly 5,000 dollars (nearly \$4,000) of ministerial expense over a four-year period. Judge Frederick McGuire said Muntz's jailing was "the ultimate humiliation" and "the supreme irony."

"Whereas before you were on the outside looking in, now you will be on the inside looking out, as it were," he told the court in passing sentence. Muntz, 52, is the fourth minister to be jailed for misappropriation in the wake of an official inquiry launched after right-winger Bjelke-Petersen was ousted in a 1987 party coup. Each has received prison terms of up to 15 months.

U.K. police take bus to crime scene

LONDON (R) — Police in the western English city of Bristol said they were having to take the bus to crime scenes. "It's very embarrassing turning up at an anxious victim's home late because the bus is late," one officer said. The Bristol detective force has only two patrol cars and the police complain they are also short of money, officers and equipment.

Event expecting baby boy

BOCA RATON, Florida (AP) — When Chris Evert found out she was pregnant, the first person she told was her husband. The second person was U.S. President George Bush. The tennis star had just flown back from Europe and visited with her doctor the morning she was to have a breakfast meeting with Bush to discuss his council on physical fitness. "I'm really thrilled about this," said Evert, now approaching the four month in her pregnancy. "I've waited a long time." The due date is Oct. 2 and amniocentesis indicates a boy is on the way, and the early front-runner for the baby's name is Taylor Andrew. Evert's husband, former Olympic skier Andy Mill, said the couple may have another child. "I want a girl with a ponytail and two-handed backhand," he said.

Soldiers protect courting toads

PRAGUE (R) — Courting toads are getting military escorts on visits to their sweethearts in Czechoslovakia. Soldiers have built special tunnels and barriers across a busy highway leading to Bohemia to help hundreds of male toads reach a female pond, Rude Pravo newspaper said. Some soldiers even helped to carry the toads across the road. In the past, hundreds of the love-lorn toads were crushed by traffic in the annual spring outing to the pond. About 2,000 toads, which are an endangered species, are expected to be saved in the 10-day campaign.

'Warsaw Pact deployed nuclear arms in Hungary'

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Soviet military bases in Hungary stored nuclear weapons for possible use in an attack on the West, former Communist Party chief Karoly Grosz revealed Monday.

"When I became premier (in June 1987) ... I was notified officially by the Soviet military leadership that nuclear charges are stationed at a base in Hungary," Grosz told the Hungarian daily Nepszabadsag.

"It was not long afterwards that I went to see ... Gorbachev and asked the devices be removed from Hungary," Grosz said. "He promised to comply."

Grosz said it took the Soviets "perhaps a whole year" to remove the devices.

His comments amounted to the first proof that the Soviets were able to boost their military capability with a series of secret agreements with the East European states belonging to Moscow's Warsaw Pact alliance. The Soviet Union has admitted only to deploying nuclear weapons in the former East Germany and

Czechoslovakia. The Pact is now effectively defunct following agreement to dissolve its military structures March 31.

Long suspected in the West, the first direct reference to nuclear weapons having been deployed in Hungary came last October, when Soviet Chief of Staff Gen. Mikhail Moiseyev said such weapons had been removed from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland.

Moscow had long admitted to stationing nuclear weapons in Czechoslovakia, which, unlike Hungary, borders NATO territory in Germany.

Following Moiseyev's revelation, Hungarian Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Laszlo Borstas denied nuclear weapons were stationed in Hungary, saying that only the means for their delivery were deployed there.

But on Saturday, Lt. Gen. Antal Amrus, state secretary in the Hungarian Defence Ministry, told Nepszabadsag that the Soviets had deployed in Hungary both rockets and fighter bombers

capable of delivering nuclear devices. He said Red Army installations taken over by the Hungarian Armed Forces during the current withdrawal of Soviet troops suggested a capacity to store nuclear weapons. But he indicated there was no proof such weapons were stored.

After he became premier in June 1987, Grosz said, he saw for the first time the agreement to deploy nuclear weapon on Hungarian soil. The pact had been signed by the late János Kadar, Hungary's Communist leader for three decades after Soviet tanks crushed the 1956 revolt against Kremlin rule.

Grosz said he did not know the kind or number of nuclear devices that were to be stationed in Hungary, and did not provide a date for the agreement.

Before the Soviet Union agreed with East Europeans to dissolve Warsaw Pact military structures, it fought to avoid publication of what is thought to be a range of secret accords that bound the alliance and boosted

its military strength. When the dissolution was formally signed on Feb. 25 in Budapest, some documents were not made public. Sources who asked not to be identified said they contained only a few of the secret accords that once made the pact a formidable military machine.